

Literacy scheme boosted by £1m donation



Hatter: donation

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A LONDON businessman yesterday pledged £1 million in response to a government appeal for help from the private sector to extend its summer literacy scheme.

The donation from Maurice Hatter, a self-made millionaire, will be added to £4 million extra promised by the Prime Minister yesterday for the project. It will increase tenfold the number of 11-year-olds given help with reading and writing during next year's summer holidays. Tony Blair announced the

expansion of the scheme yesterday during a visit to a school in the East End of London that has achieved a big improvement in results.

Mr Hatter owns IMO Precision Controls Ltd, a components company in North London that he started in 1970. During the war, he was evacuated to America, but he returned to Britain to set up his first company with £100. The philanthropist founded the Hatter Institute for Cardiovascular Studies at University College Hospital in the 1980s, raising over £400,000 for research.

Mr Blair said: "Maurice Hatter has a great record for helping char-

itable causes and clear commitment to education. This year's summer schools were a great success and the help he is offering will make next year's an even greater success."

The literacy scheme, which doubled in size this summer following a £250,000 donation by News International, owners of *The Times*, has been widely seen as a success by schools and parents. This summer, 1,600 children volunteered to take 50 hours of extra lessons this summer.

Mr Blair visited Morphet School, and praised the "fantastic job" that staff and pupils had done in turning

the school around. Mr Blair said Morphet School showed what could be done when government resources were matched by the enthusiasm and motivation of teachers and pupils.

"What we are trying to get across to people is that education is absolutely essential, not just for us but for the country; that it's an investment worth making," he said.

With his wife looking on, a tanned Mr Blair met a group of 16-year-olds who had succeeded in their GCSEs and were now aiming for university. In just three years, the school's GCSE pass rate has more than

trebled, from 11 per cent gaining five A to C grades to 39 per cent.

The head teacher, Alasdair Macdonald, said that Mr Blair had shown particular interest in the way that he had transformed standards by starting extra voluntary classes as early as 7am and continuing for up to three hours after the regular schoolday. Sponsorship by the Bankers' Trust Company has enabled teachers to be paid for running holiday revision classes and weekend study trips to Warwick and Bath universities.

Mr Macdonald, appointed head teacher five years ago when the

school was at a low ebb, said: "The children who came to extra lessons were obviously those who wanted to do well. They realised how many of them there were, and they gained confidence. The word spread that they were not just a group of misfits."

"From then on it snowballed. As more turned up they realised they were actually the majority in the school. Then, it was the pupils who were negative or cynical about learning who began to be marginalised."

He added: "It did not happen overnight. But it began to be cool to learn."

Half of English call for vote on devolution

By PETER RIDDELL

NEARLY half the English public want the chance to vote on the proposals for Scottish and Welsh devolution, according to a new MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, has a mixed message for the Government. While a clear majority of all groups support the creation of a Scottish Parliament, many in England believe they have interests which should not be ignored. These figures will be

seized upon by the Tories and other critics of devolution to challenge the proposals.

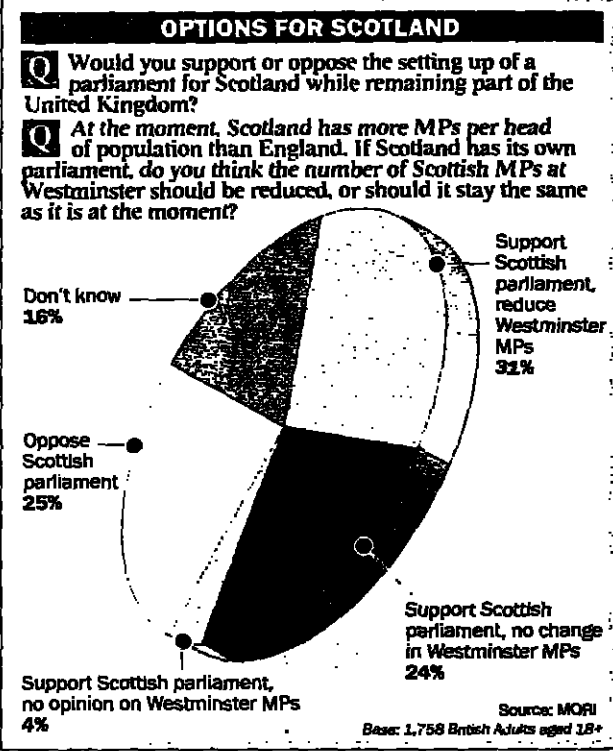
In particular, 46 per cent of people in England say they should have the opportunity to vote on the proposals for setting up a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, while 44 per cent disagree. Two-fifths of Labour supporters believe the English should have a say. But three-quarters of Scots believe that English voters should not be given such a vote.

Moreover, more than half

the English believe that, if Scotland has its own parliament, the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster should be reduced. By contrast, more than half of Scots believe the number of their MPs at Westminster should stay the same, though over a third agree that there should be a reduction. Even among those who support a Scottish Parliament, more than a half say the number of Westminster MPs from north of the border should be reduced.

Across Britain, roughly three-fifths support setting up a Scottish Parliament within the UK, with a quarter opposed. The highest level of support, at more than two-thirds, is in London where the Government has proposed a new strategic assembly and an elected mayor. Nearly a half of Tory supporters back a Parliament in Edinburgh. In Scotland, 60 per cent support a Parliament, with the lowest support and greatest opposition in the north of England. Overall, around a third of the public both support a Scottish Parliament and time favour a reduction in the number of Westminster MPs, while 24 per cent back a Parliament in Edinburgh and favour no change in the number of members. Some 25 per cent oppose a Scottish Parliament.

□ MORI interviewed 1,758 adults at 163 sampling points across Britain between August 21 and 25. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (7 per cent), are undecided (4 per cent) or who refuse to name a party (1 per cent).



Confidence has fallen among the middle class

ECONOMIC optimism among the middle classes and mortgage holders has declined sharply since the election (Peter Riddell writes). The latest MORI poll for *The Times* shows that confidence has risen sharply among the young, the least well-off and council tenants.

The MORI economic optimism index — measuring the number who think that the general economic condition will improve over the next 12 months, less those who think it will get worse — now stands at minus 2 points. It was plus 20 points just after the election. It is now broadly back to where it was at the start of the campaign, three points down on the end of March. But this masks contrasts along class lines, partly reflecting mortgage increases and taxation of pension funds. Among those with mortgages, the index has declined by 12 points; among professional managers, by 14 points; among those earning more than £25,000 a year, by 11 points.

By contrast, the index has risen since March by 14 points among unskilled workers, by 11 points among council tenants; by six points among those earning less than £9,500 a year, and by 14 points among 18 to 24-year-olds.

The public sees the NHS as the most important issue facing Britain, but the number of mentions of drug abuse has risen to the highest level for two years, though it is still ninth in the list.



Wayne Davis and his harris hawk, Hamish, at work yesterday clearing the pigeons from Westminster Abbey

Abbey pigeons are prey for hawk

By RUTH GLEDHILL

INSPIRED by the success of Paula the eagle owl in clearing St Paul's Cathedral of pigeons, Westminster Abbey has imported a raptor of its own. Hamish, a harris hawk with a 3½ ft wingspan, is let loose once a month to fly around the cloisters and buttresses.

Although the aim is to frighten the birds away and not to kill them, Hamish's talons are powerful enough to finish off a pigeon in one squeeze if any is slow enough to be caught.

"We've tried other methods, but with-

out success," George Burroughs, clerk of works, said. "We've had wires, nets, gels and a plastic owl. But even that didn't work, and that's now sitting in our garden. We have had signs up asking tourists not to feed the pigeons. But nothing has worked. We have dozens roosting each year on the building."

He said the pigeons were wrecking the abbey's monuments and stone work. Three wartime bomb holes in the cloisters had suffered particularly badly from their droppings. They blocked the drainage system and were a health hazard.

English Heritage advised using birds

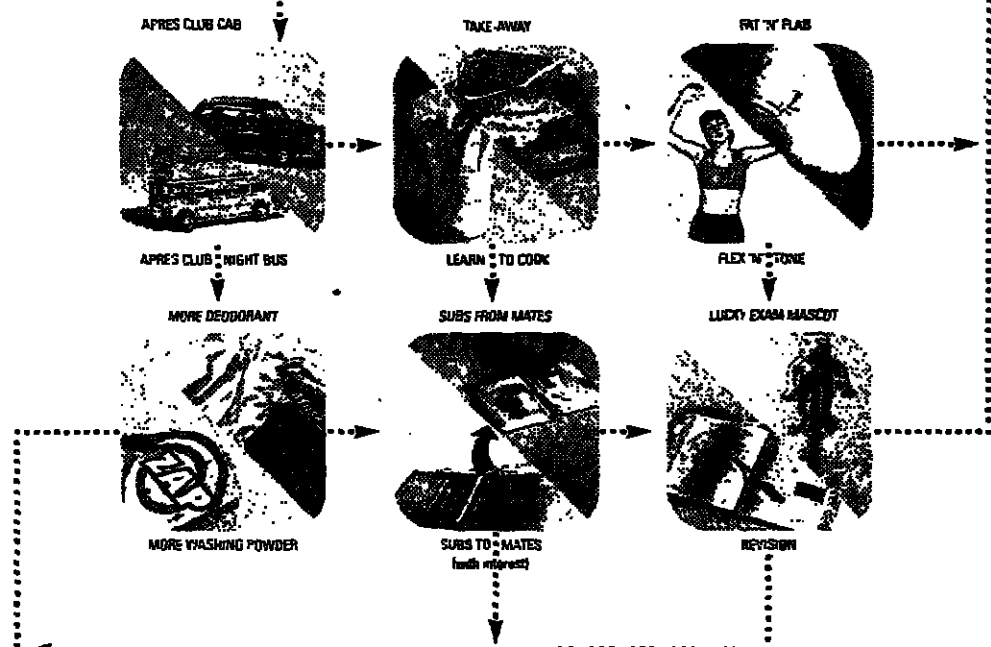
of prey, a method already employed at US Air Force bases in Suffolk. By coincidence Hamish's handler, Wayne Davis, of Corby, Northamptonshire, founder of Avian Control Systems, was already in discussion with the abbey when the eagle owl made a brief appearance at St Paul's before succumbing to a fatal illness.

Speaking yesterday after an all-day stint, Mr Davis said: "I only had to release him and the pigeons flocked together and disappeared from the area rather rapidly." He has a year's contract to see the job done properly.

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Labour sacks 'no' campaigner in referendum

By NICHOLAS WATT, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE gloves came off in the devolution campaign last night when the Scottish Secretary was accused of sacking a leading Conservative from a government advisory body. Sir Matthew Goodwin, the treasurer of the Think Twice campaign, claimed that Donald Dewar removed him from the Scottish Economic Council yesterday because of his role in the No campaign.

Sir Matthew said that Mr Dewar's move was designed to serve as a warning to the business community not to speak out against devolution.

Brian Wilson, the Scottish Office Minister, confirmed last night that Sir Matthew was not being reappointed to the council, which advises on economic policy in Scotland. However, Mr Wilson described Sir Matthew's claims about Mr Dewar as ludicrous because Sir Matthew, 68, had retired from a post that gained him his seat on the council.

Mr Wilson said: "He is in danger of making a fool of himself. He was appointed in 1991 when he was chairman of Hewlett Stuart, a major construction equipment firm. He ceased to be chairman in 1995. He no longer represents the industrial interests in respect of which he was originally put on the council."

Sir Matthew, the deputy

chairman of the Scottish Conservative Party, insisted that Mr Dewar was censuring him for his leading role in the campaign for a No vote in the referendum on September 11. He said: "There is no doubt that Labour opponents of devolution, and there are many, are pressured into staying silent. Is this democracy?"

Sir Matthew accused the Government of stifling the Think Twice campaign which, he claimed, was formed to promote a democratic debate in Scotland. He added: "We have been denied any form of government assistance and, in particular, free postage on the ground that the debate is not political. The Government, however, has obviously used large sums of taxpayers' money to promote its case."

Sir Matthew's personal attack on Mr Dewar showed the depth of feeling among campaigners with just two weeks to go until polling day.

Opinion polls indicate that the vote will be overwhelmingly in favour of a Scottish parliament. However, opponents of devolution have not given up hope because many Labour supporters have indicated that they will vote No to the second question in the referendum, which will ask them whether the new parliament should have tax-varying powers.

NEWS IN BRIEF

19 soldiers dismissed for taking drugs

Nineteen soldiers from the 2nd battalion, the Royal Anglian Regiment, have been dismissed after random testing revealed they had taken drugs, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday. The men, all privates or lance corporals based at Warminster, Wiltshire, were shown to have taken a variety of banned substances including LSD, Ecstasy, cannabis and amphetamines. Marcia Nash, an Army spokeswoman, described their actions as "extremely foolish".

Police to register gifts

Police officers in London will be expected to declare all gifts and hospitality they receive with the launch today of registers of interests. The registers, covering the Metropolitan Police Force's 41,400 uniformed and civilian staff, will be kept as a permanent record available for inspection by internal auditors and the Inspectorate of Constabulary.

CJD claims new victim

A fitness fanatic has become Britain's latest victim of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Chris Warner, 36, a former senior systems analyst, of Ripley, Derbyshire, was told he had the disease three weeks ago. Formerly a keen footballer and skier, he can no longer walk without help and has difficulty talking. He has been given less than a year to live.

Boy is found hanged

A boy aged 14 died after being found hanging by a belt at his home in Watford, Hertfordshire, just three miles from where Claire Rogers, 13, and Daniel Gibbs, 10, were found strangled by a scarf early this week. Police said there was no suggestion the death was a copy of that incident. The boy was found in a bathroom by his mother on her return home.

Author's generosity

A hospital and a university are benefiting from donations from Catherine Cookson, the bestselling author. The Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle upon Tyne will receive £200,000 for research into chronic gastro-intestinal disorders. Sunderland University is being given £100,000 and will inaugurate the Catherine Cookson Reading Room.

Green leader 'thrown out' over Eden

By SIMON DE BRUKELLES

THE 13-YEAR-OLD leader of the Green Party's youth wing claimed yesterday that he has been thrown out of the movement after backing backing plans for the world's largest greenhouse.

Simon Eddy, described as the Greens' answer to William Hague, says that he fell out with colleagues because he spoke to developers of the Eden Project — a scheme to turn a disused china clay pit near St Blazey, Cornwall, into a scientific research institute costing £100 million, including £35 million from the Millennium Commission. The party fears that the

project will be environmentally damaging and cause traffic congestion, and says the money would be better spent on reforestation or other projects.

Simon, from St Austell, Cornwall, says that the project will go ahead regardless so he had made a number of suggestions to developers such as a park-and-ride scheme for visitors. He is the founder of Splat, a nationwide youth Green organisation.

In a statement the Green Party said: "Simon has not been expelled, he chose to resign rather than support Green Party policy. It is very unfortunate we have fallen out over this issue. When you

join the Green Party you undertake to follow our agreed manifesto."

However, Simon was adamant he did not resign: "I am really unhappy about the situation. I have definitely not resigned. The national Green Party are treating me absolutely diabolically."

The Eden Project was set up after the 1992 Rio summit and aims to explore man's dependency on plants. Its marketing manager, Paul Travers, said: "We don't think the Green Party has been very grown-up about this. Simon is an extraordinary lad. Eat your heart out, William Hague! We will explore his ideas."

Rescued sailors lost everything at sea

Family tell of relief as navy arrived and they could abandon ship

By STEPHEN FARRELL

THE only possessions left to the round-the-world sailors plucked from the Bay of Biscay by Royal Navy helicopters are their clothes and a brown plastic bag containing their passports, travel documents and insurance.

Don and Yvonne Newman, and Daniel, Mr Newman's son from a previous marriage, sold their home and sailed to Gibraltar two months ago, planning to decide their final destination when they arrived.

However, they were caught for three days in 30ft waves and force nine strong gales 200 miles southwest of Brest. The conditions were described by one of the Sea King helicopter pilots who rescued them on Tuesday night as the worst that he had seen.

A Royal Navy spokesman confirmed yesterday that the couple were insured. He refused to be drawn on their wisdom in attempting the voyage but suggested that people could "draw their own conclusions".

Aboard the flight deck of the aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*, which arrived in Portsmouth yesterday with its three extra passengers, Mr Newman, 45, simply thanked his rescuers and said: "We are absolutely shattered. This was our home and we have lost everything. I don't know what we will do next, we just want to rest for a few days."

"We are sensible people, we had taken a five-day forecast and this weather was not predicted. We knew help was coming but it was magnificent to see the navy helicopter arrive. We were comfortable with the fact that the yacht could hold up to those conditions; it was just a question of whether we could hold out that long."

He finally decided to send a distress call after his wife had been extremely seasick for three days and he felt he just

could not cope with the situation any more.

"I had been at the helm and the conditions were getting worse and worse. I was just getting exhausted and the seas just got bigger and bigger and I got windier and windier. We were taking water over the top of the cockpit and it was coming over the boat."

Mrs Newman, 40, an aromatherapist, admitted that she was at the limits of her endurance when the first Sea King's winchman Chief Petty Officer Bob Saunders was

The sheer determination on the man's face was amazing. He gritted his teeth and just carried on. His bravery was incredible.

lowered aboard to take them off the stricken 36ft yacht *Touchdown*. She said: "I would like to stress we were not expecting this weather. We are obviously sensible people and we don't go out in rough weather. We actually waited some time for the right forecast."

"It was really horrific. We have been through a hell of a time, it was very traumatic. All I wanted to do was get Daniel off the yacht. He hadn't eaten for three days and I had just got to the stage where I couldn't look after him any more. I felt so ill."

Describing Chief Petty Officer Saunders's heroic efforts to reach the yacht at dusk in poor visibility, she said: "The waves were coming over the yacht. We didn't know when help was going to come but

then the helicopter arrived. It was absolutely fantastic.

"The wind was so bad it took four attempts for them to even get on to the yacht but the determination on the man's face was amazing. He gritted his teeth and just carried on. His bravery was incredible."

The couple, who are believed to have sold their story to a tabloid newspaper, were then taken to meet Mrs Newman's parents, Dennis and Jean Gay, for an emotional reunion aboard ship before being driven away.

Lieutenant-Commander Matt Jennings, the helicopter pilot who winched Daniel to safety, said: "In 20 years of flying they were some of the worst conditions I have ever encountered. It was pretty hairy but the rescue team were magnificent. We got them all off safely. The little boy came into the helicopter with a big grin on his face."

Daniel yesterday waved happily from the ship's railings at the Royal Marine band and crowd welcoming *Illustrious* home after she had completed an eight-month tour of the Far East.

After the rescue Daniel was given a tour of the flight deck and a breakfast of toast and jam by members of the 800 crew. He said later: "The sea was a bit choppy. I was a bit scared, I didn't think I would be able to get up to the helicopter but the man was nice and they helped me."

Speaking about being winched up to the Sea King helicopter, Daniel said: "I didn't think I would be able to make it up there. It was quite scary going up."

He said the three of them had all looked after each other on board the *Touchdown* but he added: "I didn't feel safe and sound until I was on the ship."

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Yvonne, Daniel and Don Newman arriving in Portsmouth aboard HMS *Illustrious* yesterday. The couple praised their rescuers' heroism

Newcomers who took on the world

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

AT THE Grafham Water sailing club, Don Newman was a respected member. A non-sailing member. Yesterday friends and sailors spoke of their astonishment that the couple had ever attempted to sail around the world.

As details emerged of how Mr Newman set out to make a fantasy come true, sailing organisations said that the voyage had been ended by conditions that could have tested a veteran.

Mr Newman sold his house last year in Great Staughton, Cambridgeshire, moved into rented accommodation and bought his yacht *Touchdown* for about £25,000. He joined Grafham Water club near Huntingdon as a non-sailing member and in the spring he took a £25 one-day course in VHF radio there. He also took a course in diesel engine maintenance.

In June he married Yvonne, an aromatherapist. She took a shore-based navigation course

but failed to complete it. Mr Newman left his job as production manager of Titan Motor Sports at Huntingdon. Or Timms, the managing director, said: "I am pleased he is safe. He is just a very easy-going guy who wanted to go and do his thing. I think it is right that he was not specially experienced at sailing."

Mr Newman asked his neighbour, Leslie Rant, 39, who has sailed the Atlantic and crossed the Bay of Biscay, to help them to sail their newly acquired yacht around from Lowestoft. Mr Rant said: "I wasn't available so they must have paid someone else to help."

"A sailor needs a course with a recognised teaching establishment and sailing within his capabilities. If you haven't got experience, and you are in bad weather, there is more chance of getting into trouble."

"If you are short of experience and you are just two sailing with a young child, it's



Rant experience does help, he said

not a very strongly crewed yacht. But having said that, lots of people do manage."

Mr Newman sailed from Lowestoft to Plymouth and then to France before starting his voyage to Spain. His brother, Richard, said he was fulfilling an ambition to sail that he had had since he was a youngster but he had never had the opportunity to take it up as a regular pastime.

"Sailing was something he was always interested in. He has just been round the coast, just doing off-shore stuff," he said. "I do not know if I would describe him as a novice. He is a strong-minded character, very determined, good company, and with a sense of humour."

"He looked washed out when I saw the pictures of him. I'm extremely relieved everyone is all right."

Robin Sjöberg, cruising manager at the Royal Yachting Association, insisted that regulations should not be brought in to prevent sailors going to sea with little qualifications or experience. He claimed that countries that insisted on licences, such as the land-locked Switzerland and Austria, had a higher record of accidents.

Mr Sjöberg said the family had responded correctly to atrocious conditions: "They were in a force nine in the Bay of Biscay, with 50ft waves crashing around. They responded correctly. They made a call out when they reached

the limit of their endurance. There is no evidence that they did not prepare themselves or their boat adequately."

A spokesman for the RYA, which represents sea activities across the UK, said: "We know regulation is not the way to do it. Sailors should be allowed to do what they want to." Six to eight sailors die each year at sea out of a total of about four million.

A spokeswoman for the Royal National Lifeboat Association said: "We do not like people taking risks. We try to educate people who use the sea by giving advice and we always suggest people go on training courses before sailing. It is unwise to sail with little experience."

James Jermain, acting editor of *Yachting Monthly*, said that the Bay of Biscay was a notorious sailing area but pointed out that hundreds of British children went around the world on boats with their parents. "It is uncomfortable at times but by and large they come through the better for it."

Office for Parker Bowles as charity role grows

By EMMA WILKINS

CAMILLA Parker Bowles is to open an office in London to deal with her work for the National Osteoporosis Society and general correspondence.

Mrs Parker Bowles, who receives about 50 letters a week from members of the public and became patron of the charity in April, has appointed Amanda MacManus, 42, as her personal assistant. Mrs MacManus, whose husband, James, is managing director of Times Supplements, is working from home while Mrs Parker Bowles searches for suitable premises.

Mrs MacManus said: "We were introduced a few weeks ago by a mutual friend and we hit it off straight away. She is a very nice woman with a good sense of humour." Mrs MacManus will work three days a week. "I will be sorting out her correspondence and general admin. She will be in charge. It's a very accommodating situation being able to work part-time, because I have young children."

Mrs Parker Bowles's deci-



Amanda MacManus: personal assistant

sion to open her own office was being interpreted yesterday as a sign that she is moving towards a more public role. However, it remains unlikely that she will attend any official functions with the Prince of Wales in the near future.

When Mrs Parker Bowles hosts her first big fundraising party for the National Osteoporosis Society next month, the Prince will be elsewhere, watching the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-on-Avon. The Prince's office at St James's Palace declined to say whether he or the Duchy of Cornwall was helping to finance the new office.

Diana, Princess of Wales, was continuing her Mediterranean cruise with Dodi Fayed yesterday, exactly a year since her divorce. She is expected to return home to Kensington Palace today.

Surrey police solve African murders

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

ASTUTE detective work by a team of policemen from Surrey led to three suspected former guerrillas being charged in Mozambique yesterday with the murders of a young British couple.

Andrew McGowan, 35, a former captain in the Royal Fusiliers, and his wife, Caroline, 30, were on their way through Mozambique to Malawi, where they had lived since 1993, when they were ambushed and killed.

Pressure by the Foreign Office and the British High Commission in Maputo, the Mozambique capital — the

former Portuguese colony is now a member of the Commonwealth — resulted in the Ministry of Interior calling on Britain for help. In June, a three-man team of detectives from Surrey Police headquarters at Guildford flew to Mozambique. After two weeks' work in the hot, scrubby bush they turned up clues pointing to the identity of the killers.

Andisene Silveira, the provincial police commander, said three men had confessed to the April killings and had been charged with murder. It is expected that they will go on trial in about a month and could face between 12 and 24 years' imprisonment.



Ambush victims: Caroline and Andrew McGowan

Master wordsmiths fail spelling test

By ROBIN YOUNG

SPELL CHECK

DO NOT despair if you cannot spell *nil desperandum* or if you get into a muddle over *imbroglio*. You are not alone.

They are among the most fiendishly difficult words to spell in the English language, according to the compilers of the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Nil desperandum was at the head of a list of lexicographers' horrors put together by the experts who compile the *OED*. When *The Times* tried it out on famous wordsmiths yesterday, the author I.C. Ballard was one who could not get it right. "I must protest," he said, "that it is not English. It is Latin."

No excuse, according to the taskmasters in Oxford. A spokeswoman said: "Many words in everyday use are not English in origin. School pupils returning to school shortly are still expected to be able to spell them." The list was designed

The words used in the challenge: *nil desperandum*, *imbroglio*, *hoi polloi*, *pterodactyls*, *unconscious*, *licentious*, *meretricious*, *plagiarism*, *poetaster*, *counterfeiter*, *indecipherable*. Others in Oxford's complete list include: *shibboleths*, *fuchsia*, *pschologist*, *encephalopathy*, *je-june*, *nonpareil* and *ichthyological*.

to test even the most accomplished linguistic practitioners who, it was thought, might have trouble with obscurities such as *poetaster* or *reboasom*.

The idea came from a "back to school" campaign in which the *OED* publishers put together a list of the most common spelling mistakes. Words such as *accommodation* or *separate* are frequently spelled wrongly by children. Even adults have

difficulty remembering the difference between *licence* and *license* or recalling those occasions when *i* does not precede *e* even after *c*.

The new list is claimed to be even harder because many of the words break the accepted rules of English spelling, mainly because several have foreign origins. Edmund Weiner, deputy chief editor of the *OED*, said: "These are words which often defy all logic and sometimes seem deliberately designed to cause trouble, not only for children but parents and adults in general."

Trying the top ten in the list yesterday, we found that Mr Ballard succeeded with nine, while Stephen Dorrell, the former Education Secretary, slipped on *plagiarism*. The young novelist Alain de Botton tripped over *hoi polloi*, *licentious* and *indecipherable*, but John Grigg, the former Lord Altrincham, returned a flawless scorecard with ten out of ten.

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MI5 chief to reveal how many secret files still exist

Shayler affair could force early disclosure, says Michael Evans

STEPHEN LANDER, the Director-General of MI5, is planning to make public how many files on individuals and organisations are still held by the Security Service.

Although it has been suggested that MI5 has at least one million files, the published figure is expected to reveal an archive of several hundred thousand. An up-to-date figure is likely to be included in the next edition of the Security Service booklet in the new year.

However, with MI5 currently in the spotlight over the revelations of David Shayler, the former Security Service officer, about past telephone-tapping and bugging operations, Mr Lander is expected to choose a moment in the near future to disclose the true figure and to reassure MPs and the public that MI5 is already destroying many of the older files.

MI5 began destroying many unwanted personal files about a year ago as a result of a 1992 report by the Security Service Commissioner on guidelines for MI5 on record-keeping.

After Mr Shayler's claims that the 1970s file on Peter Mandelson, the Minister Without Portfolio, was still available to read by MI5 desk officers in 1992, Mr Lander is also expected to take further measures to tighten procedures on staff access to files and to ensure that all old records that no longer have any value are destroyed.

It was being emphasised yesterday that a large proportion of the files were held in the so-called red category, which meant they were dormant unless there was new intelligence which justified reclassifying them to the amber or green category.

Historical files, those of interest to historians writing about wartime MI5 operations, will never be destroyed and there are plans to begin releasing some of the First World War documents later this year to the Public Record Office at Kew.

Many of the more recent

files held by MI5 are on foreign nationals, such as members and associates of terrorist groups and hostile intelligence services overseas. While most of the files on individuals are deemed to pose a potential threat to national security, some have no "adverse" content. Those are the files on government ministers and other VIPs who need security protection.

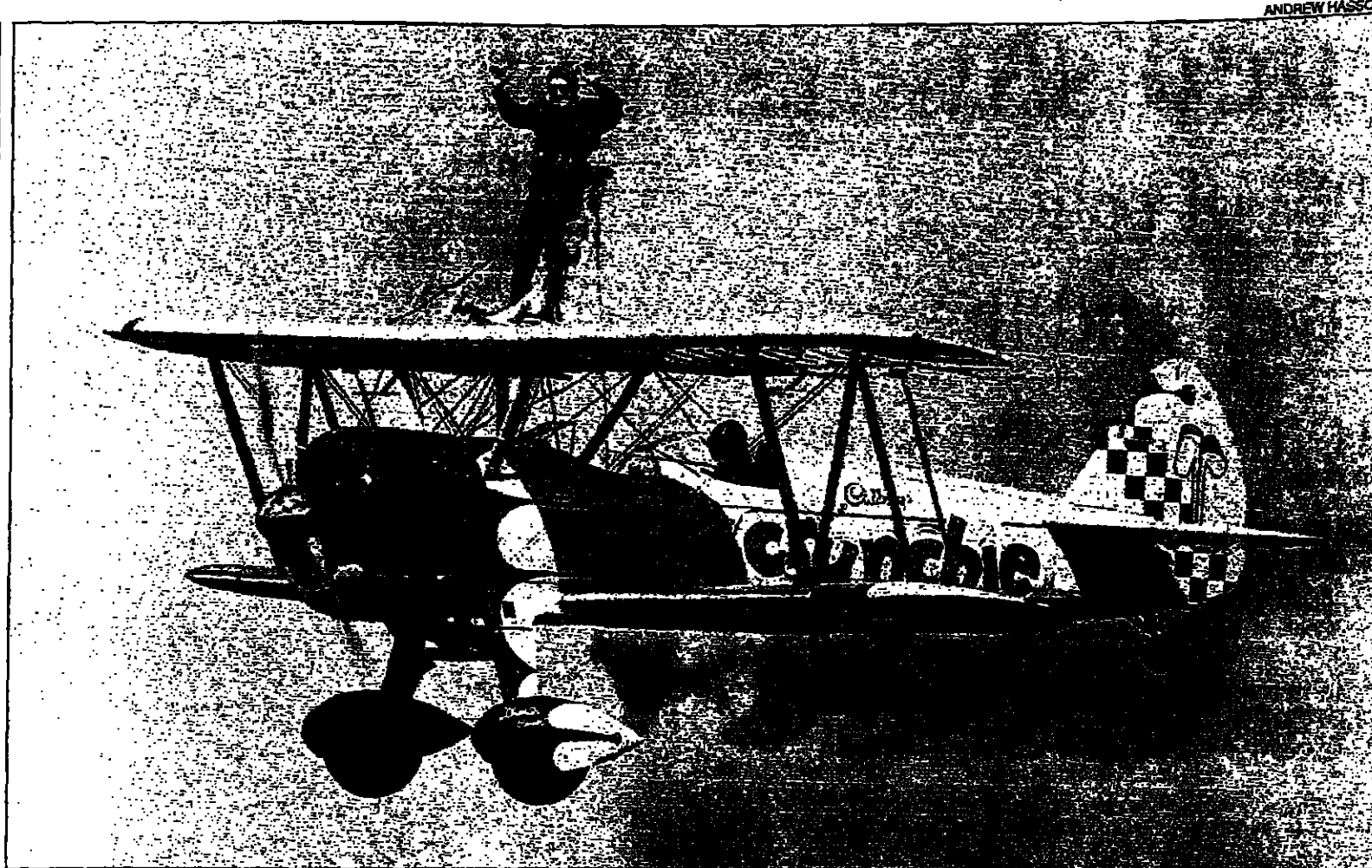
The Shayler affair raises the question why a relatively low-grade desk officer had access to sensitive 20-year-old files on operations involving individuals who had now become senior political figures.

MI5 has been seriously embarrassed but it has also found itself caught in a trap. All the 1,350 staff members, apart from those who dust, clean and change the light bulbs, are vetted to the highest level before they are employed. Once MI5 recruits are given full-time jobs, they are entrusted to see classified material on a daily basis.

However, the parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee, chaired by Tom King, a former Tory Defence Secretary, has for some time been warning Mr Lander and the heads of the other agencies of its concern about internal security and the need to keep access to secret documents tightly controlled.

MI5's system for releasing files to individual members is on a need-to-know basis. However, unlike GCHQ, the government signals intelligence centre in Cheltenham, which is more rigidly compartmentalised, MI5 has to link up with other departments such as the Ministry of Defence, as well as the police and Customs. That means that some files are given fairly extensive circulation.

The parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee, which was set up under the 1994 Intelligence Services Act, is likely to raise the issue of MI5's system of releasing files at the first opportunity. It is not due to meet until October.



Les Seales on the flight that he tried to keep a secret from his wife. His wartime exploits earned him the nickname Dizzy

How a war hero of 83 returned to Dizzy heights for flight of his life

By RICHARD DUCE

LES SEALES relived one of his life's most remarkable sensations yesterday. The fact that he is now 83 and has a wooden leg did not hold him up at all.

He was strapped on a Boeing Stearman for a ten-minute spin over Sussex, after answering a local newspaper advertisement for volunteer "wingwalkers". The stunt pilot, Mike Dentish, was seeking younger applicants, but Mr Seales had experience.

In a wartime career that earned him the nickname Dizzy, he was in the rear gun-

turret of a Defiant aircraft when it was crippled and the pilot injured. At 3,000ft, Mr Seales got out of his turret and on to the wing to clamber along the fuselage and reach the pilot. He freed the man from his harness and the pair then parachuted to safety.

Mr Seales had hoped to keep yesterday's flight secret from his wife, Joy, but she heard about the plan on local radio. "She told me I was stupid," said Mr Seales. "It's just something I wanted to do."

Armed with a doctor's certificate confirming that he was fit, he took to the skies in

grey flannel trousers, blue shirt, tie, goggles and a red leather flying cap. His trousers were clipped to his socks because, at more than 90mph, the flapping can lead to bruising. Landing back at Shoreham airfield, he said: "Very good, I would do it again. It was far more pleasant than my wartime experiences."

Mr Seales was a pre-war motorcycle champion, winning the Swiss motorcycle grand prix in 1938. After his 1941 wing walk, Sergeant Seales moved to the 277 Air-Sea Rescue Squadron at Shoreham, helping British

pilots who ditched off France. After the war, he was a representative for a tractor firm.

It was not until ten years ago that he lost a leg, when he was knocked down by a bus in London. He still works three mornings a week as a garage receptionist, and helps at a Citizens Advice Bureau and at Shoreham aviation museum near his home.

Yesterday he was watched by his daughter Gillian O'Neill, granddaughter Karen and a wartime friend, Keith "Kiwi" Saunders, 80, who was visiting for a reunion. Ms O'Neill said: "I



Seales very good, he said

have been in touch with The Guinness Book of Records but there is no category for the oldest wingwalker. I hope that will change. If he's not the oldest, then he must be the oldest with one leg."

Return of the rains washes out harvest

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

HEAVY thunderstorms yesterday brought a soggy end to a summer of extremes, causing local flooding and wreaking havoc on the cereal harvest. Despite the cooling rain, this August is on course to be the second hottest on record, with an average combined night and day temperature so far of 18.8C.

Until the clouds opened, Britain had sweltered in three weeks of sultry heat, while two months earlier the wettest June since 1879 had washed out sporting and social events.

Fans at the Glastonbury music festival slithered about in a sea of mud, play was abandoned for hours on end at Wimbledon and Lord's, and race-

goers in all their finery were drenched at Royal Ascot.

The heaviest rain yesterday fell around Portsmouth and Chichester, where 22mm was recorded between 3am and 4am. Strong to gale-force winds hit Wales and the South West.

Forecasters said that thunderstorms would continue through the weekend, broken by only brief patches of sunshine, with no prospect of a return to the temperatures of 33C recorded earlier this month.

The recent rain has caught out many farmers, leaving their cereal crops too wet to be harvested. Over much of England by this time of year most of the crop would normally be safely stored in barns. Richard Whitlock, wheat director of Banks Agriculture, one of Britain's biggest grain mer-

chants, said: "Although the cereal harvest is largely finished in East Anglia, between 35 per cent and 55 per cent is still in the ground in areas such as Lincolnshire and Yorkshire."

Greg Wapson, of Walk Farm, Little Wighton, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, said: "It has been a nightmare. I began harvesting my 250 acres of wheat on August 13 and got in about 25 acres on the first day. Then the heavens opened. Since then I have been able to take the combine out on only three days and have harvested just 25 more acres."

"Normally I reckon to get the wheat cleared by the end of August, but there is little hope of that now. I need at least two sunny days to get the wheat dry enough to cut and the forecast is for more rain. The moisture level is about

25 per cent, and I will have to spend about £7,500 this year drying the grain once it has been cut."

Oliver Walston, who farms 2,000 acres of seed wheat and maling barley at Thripplow, Cambridgeshire, said: "This is my smallest harvest since the great drought of 1976. Yields are down about 18 per cent compared with last year. We had drought in April, when we needed rain, and rain in June when we needed sun. Thank God for European Union subsidies."

Mr Whitlock estimated that the national wheat crop this year would be about 14.1 million tonnes, down from 16.1 million in 1996. "Farmers are relearning how to cope with the reality of a maritime climate," he said.

Forecast, page 22

Despite half a century of inflation, we are - officially - better off

By PETER FOSTER

FIFTY years after the Government began compiling the Retail Prices Index, official figures show that we have never had it so good.

While the value of the pound has shrunk 20 times since 1947, earnings for the average male manual worker have risen 50-fold, leaving him 2½ times better off.

For the past 50 years, to produce a reliable measure of inflation, government inspectors have checked the prices of a national shopping basket of goods and services bought by an average British household. In 1947, Clement Attlee was Prime Minister and Parlia-

ment approved an extra 100 clothing coupons for Princess Elizabeth to buy a dress for her wedding to Prince Philip. It cost three shillings (15p) to see the FA Cup final at Wembley or to buy a 78rpm Glenn Miller gramophone record. A pint of beer, a packet of headache tablets and a half-pound bar of chocolate each cost 1s 4d (7p), an Austin A40 family saloon car £416, and Roald Dahl's book, *Over to You*, 7s 6d (38p).

In 1997, it would cost £20 to buy what £1 would have bought in 1947. Despite this inflationary pressure, the 50-fold rise in weekly earnings for an average male manual worker - from 6p to £300 -

has meant a significant overall rise in living standards.

A shopping basket containing a loaf of bread, a pint of milk, half a dozen eggs, a quarter pound of tea, a pound of butter, sugar and beef would have cost 5s 4d (27p) in 1947 and taken the average male manual worker two hours to earn the money to pay for it. In 1997, the equivalent worker works less than one hour to earn the 56p needed to buy the same goods.

Some commodities have increased in price much faster than the rate of inflation. According to government figures, bread prices have risen 40-fold, vehicle licences 144-fold, and Sunday newspapers



approximately 100-fold. Property prices have also shot up: a six-bedroom house in Wimbledon which cost £7,250 in 1947 now sells for £775,000, an

increase of more than 100-fold. Over the years the national shopping basket has been greatly expanded to reflect the changing fads, fashions and

technologies of the advancing years. In the late 1940s, when Denis Compton was smashing cricket records and an exhausted nation was recovering from the Second World War, items included wild rabbits (before skinning), back-lacing corsets, a pound of soda, sewing machines and gramophone records.

By the 1950s, items such as NHS prescription charges, Tupperware, brown bread and second hand cars had found their way onto the list. In the 1960s, the growing trend in convenience shopping was acknowledged by the inclusion of fish fingers, crisps and sliced bread. The modish motor scooter also found a

place. As fashions continued to change, so did the list. The 1970s saw the inclusion of duvets, mortgage interest payments, electric hairdryers and the home perm kit, which held its place only briefly. The fast-living consumer culture of the 1980s brought in frozen meals, microwave ovens, eye test fees and condoms.

Today, most of the new entries involve advances in technology. They include CD-ROMS, computer games, satellite dishes and Eurotornel fares. More than a quarter of men admit to loving shopping, according to a survey of British clothes' buying by the industrial analysts, Mintel.

The biggest influence on men's choice is what their wives will think, while women are more swayed by whether their clothes suit their shape.

The survey found that both sexes spend an average of £39.41 a month on clothes, but a quarter of men spend less than £10 a month. At the other end of the scale, men are more likely than women to spend more than £75 on their wardrobes.

Moiria Patterson, the reports author, said: "Men are definitely more fashion conscious than they used to be. Men's lifestyle magazines have grown up enormously, providing a vehicle for advertising and offering a lead."

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Script agent writes off British films

Stars agree that too little time and money is being spent on screenplays

FROM DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT, IN VENICE

BRITISH film producers were accused yesterday of rushing sub-standard scripts into production without investing crucial time and money in their development.

According to Julian Friedmann, a literary agent who specialises in film and television scripts, that is the real reason why half the films made in Britain fail to get a screening: they do not deserve to be shown. He said the problem was that few British producers differentiated between good and bad scripts when they had already raised the money to go into production.

"Many producers can't even read," he said. "They get a script and think, 'Okay.' I've had rows with producers who say, 'We've got the money and we're ready to go.' But the script has not been ready." He added: "Directors don't always know much about scripts, either."

The Americans invest an average of 6 per cent of a film's

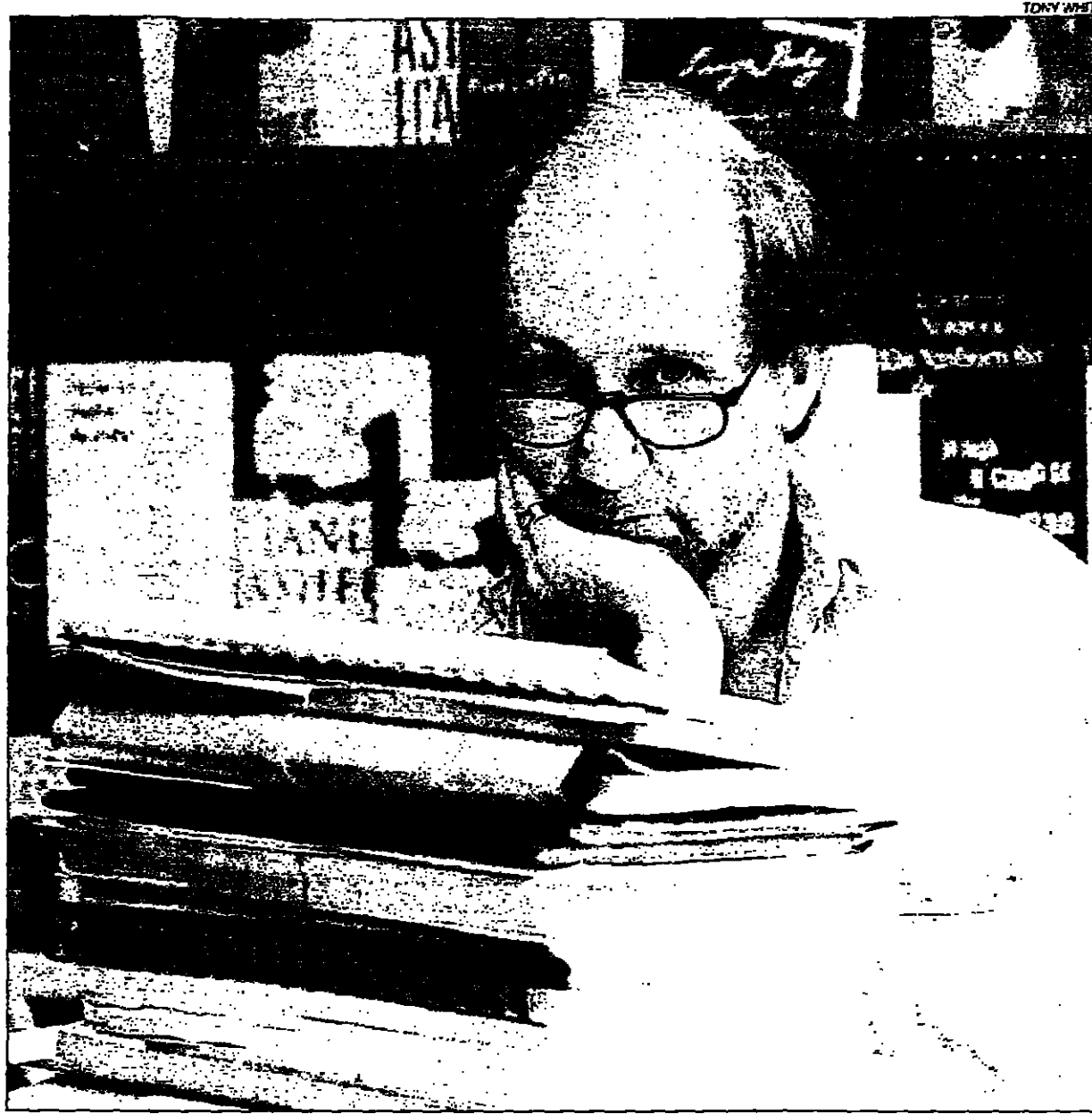
budget on script development, compared to the British average of 1 to 2 per cent. Mr Friedmann, author of *How To Make Money Scriptwriting*, said it showed. "Most are nonsense. The Americans are not being extravagant. It's an investment that will be earned back many times over. We pay little more than lip service to writers. In the US, their work

product. The literary tradition that British films boasted in the 1940s and 1950s had dwindled, and rarely did an audience leave a cinema recalling a single line from a British film.

It showed when a script had been repeatedly fine-tuned. Richard Curtis was said to have done 17 rewrites on *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, Britain's biggest box-office hit. "That's what made it successful," said Mr Friedmann, whose clients include Michael Redpath, a stockbroker for whose first novel, *Free to Trade*, deals worth £750,000 were arranged.

The agent's views were echoed by Emma Thompson, who won an Oscar for her screenplay for *Sense and Sensibility*. She was at the Venice film festival yesterday to promote her latest film, *The Winter Guest*. Recalling her Austen adaptation, she said: "It took me five years, not every day, but I was rewriting endlessly. The important thing is to give yourself space between drafts. Then, when it comes back, you don't resent chucking out everything and starting again."

She agreed that producers did not spend enough time on the script. "They think they've got the story and the structure and it's done. But it isn't. You have got to fill it with veins and blood. That takes time. If



Julian Friedmann, who believes that British film producers are unable to tell a good script from a bad one

you don't nurture your writers, you cannot have good theatre."

Alan Rickman, also in Venice to promote *The Winter Guest*, his directorial debut, said: "As an actor, it is the writing that inspires." The actor James Wilby, who was at the festival to talk about *Regeneration*, in which he plays the war poet Siegfried Sassoon, was more critical of the American approach, suggesting that writing suffered when created by committee.

He enjoyed fine-tuning a script with the director at the production stage. Mr Friedmann, however,

believes that many British scripts need more than fine-tuning. His views are supported by Peter Ansgore, Channel 4's former head of drama. In a book that will be published

New movies often reveal an active contempt for dialogue and a complete lack of interest in human relationships

next month, *From Liverpool to Los Angeles: On Writing for Theatre, Film and Television*, Mr Ansgore laments the fact that "new movies often reveal an active contempt for dialogue and a complete lack of

interest in human relationships".

He lays the blame firmly at the directors' feet. "The vast majority of directors in this country are not writers and often have a fairly narrow vision of what a movie should be. In a paradoxical way, the increased power of directors is leading to the absence of the writer from the set and the film-making process in general."

He adds: "From the 1930s to the 1950s, Hollywood was completely part of a literary tradition... The films were dependent on dialogue and economic story-telling. The director's contribution was of

course crucial; but no stars would have been made without great lines."

Summing up the differences in approach, Mr Friedmann said: "A British director tends to linger rather too long on a scene. He'll show someone leaving a house, putting on a coat, locking his house, going down his drive, unlocking his car, driving off, stopping the car, taking his seat-belt off, walking up a drive of someone else's house. In an American film, you would see him pick up his car keys and the next shot would be of him ringing someone's doorbell." Audiences were sophisticated enough to be able to use their imaginations for such superfluous detail.



Alan Rickman and Emma Thompson in Venice yesterday

Cousin of murdered girl was top police suspect

By ADAM FRESKO

A GIRL whose torso was found floating in the Thames was sexually assaulted and probably strangled before her body was dismembered.

Kirsty Tidman, 14, was missing in May this year and was last seen alive with her 30-year-old cousin, Paul Pearson, who later committed suicide after being questioned by police. Police regarded Mr Pearson, who was also a close family friend, as the main suspect in her disappearance. Poplar Coroner's Court in East London was told.

Her parents first realised Kirsty was missing while they were visiting her grandmother. Her father, Keith, borrowed Mr Pearson's hire car to look for her and found some of his daughter's hair bands in the car. He questioned Mr Pearson, who told him he had given her a lift earlier in the evening.

Police later found evidence of her blood in the boot of the car and believe she could have been murdered before her father started looking for her.

Mr Tidman, from Charlton in southeast London, agreed with Dr Stephen Chan, the coroner, that his daughter was a normal, happy teenager. Dr Chan said he was satisfied that Kirsty had been killed by someone known to her. "The body was brutal and cruelly dismembered and disposed of in the River Thames and was recovered but as yet the head remains missing."

Police had been hoping to charge Mr Pearson and were waiting for confirmation that the blood in the car was Kirsty's when he committed suicide. Detective Inspector Alan Buttevant said: "Paul Pearson would have been charged with her murder. Investigations yielded quite substantial evidence and I have no doubt in my mind he would have been convicted."

Dr Chan, conducting a verdict of unlawful killing, told Kirsty's parents, Lynda and Keith: "This is a human tragedy of the highest degree. Words cannot express the family's grief and anger."

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Swiss in widening sterility scandal

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE furor in Switzerland over revelations that doctors forcibly sterilised mental patients widened yesterday after allegations that the practice was continuing and a government critic demanded an official investigation.

The Government ducked responsibility, saying that the 26 cantons of the Swiss federation each made their own decisions on public health.

In Austria, the Government announced that it will review vague legislation on the sterilisation of minors and those in care, amid a growing storm over revelations about forced sterilisations.

"The reason for the proposed review is that the law does not contain sufficient, clear rules for regulating permission for sterilisation," Nikolaus Michalek, the Justice Minister, said.

Cook delivers rights sermon to Asians

ROBIN COOK risked a row over human rights and arms sales in Indonesia on the second leg of his South-East Asia tour last night.

In a politically symbolic move, his first act on arriving in Jakarta was to telephone Bishop Carlos Belo — winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and leading independence campaigner in East Timor, the former Portuguese colony annexed by Indonesia. Jakarta has been accused of serious human rights abuses against the East Timorese and there are renewed reports of Indonesian military action.

The Foreign Secretary told the bishop: "I want to take the opportunity of making the point of speaking to you."

Earlier yesterday in Kuala Lumpur, the first stop of his four-nation tour, Mr Cook signalled his uncompromising support for the Western concept of human rights. In a direct rebuttal of his Malaysian hosts' calls for a revised United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, the Foreign Secretary said it was only



The Foreign Secretary is risking discord with his firm human rights stance, writes David Watts from Jakarta

reasonable to require all members of the UN to abide by the rules of membership set out in the 1948 declaration.

Despite pre-trip promises not to preach to the countries of the region, there remained a seemingly immutable commitment to the existing declaration. A last-minute change of text, as a sop to Malaysian sensibilities, in which Mr Cook noted that "no one country should lecture others on their duty", failed to temper his criticism.

Malaysia and China, among others, are seeking amendments to the declaration to take greater account of economic rights and to play down its political and social content. His insistence on the universality of human rights will resonate in Indonesia as

well as The Philippines and Singapore, where judgment is being awaited in a controversial libel action against Ben Jeyaretnam, the Opposition leader. Significantly, Mr Cook picked out only the Burmese Government by name as an abuser of human rights.

"Human rights," he said in a speech to Malaysia's Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, "are a fundamental of foreign policy. There is room for debate about the implementation but not about the principle. Promotion of personal freedoms is central to the goals we all share: free and open societies, dynamic economies trading together as part of a safe and prosperous international community."

Mr Cook said there was no conflict between human rights

and economic progress. "On the contrary, those at the leading edge of technology are the very countries with the strongest democratic institutions."

He declared: "This is no accident. The most prosperous economies of the next century will be those which have liberated the energy and the creativity of their people."

Mr Cook's views were quietly contested by Abdullah Badawi, the Malaysian Foreign Minister, who said: "We have different cultural values. We have to deal with it in our own way but that doesn't mean that we don't recognise freedom of the individual." He added: "I think in human rights it's very difficult to have one common yardstick that is universally applicable."

Over lunch Mr Cook had amicable talks with Datuk Seri Dr Mahatir Mohamad, the Prime Minister, who pronounced that relations with Britain were healthy after Malaysia's "Buy British Last" campaign and the row over the Pergau Dam funding.



Mussolini greets Hitler in Venice in 1934. He said the Führer's handshake was "limp"

Historian sheds light on Il Duce's view of Hitler

War-time Axis

was 'purely

tactical' and hid

mistrust and

hostility, writes

Richard Owen

AN ITALIAN historian has revived controversy over the relationship between Mussolini and Hitler, pointing out that although the two dictators were allies, Mussolini secretly regarded the Führer as "a tragic buffoon, a megalomaniac and a sexual deviant".

Fabio Andriola argues in a new book, *Mussolini: Hitler's Secret Enemy*, that "Nazism-Fascism" is "a left-wing invention", since the ideological roots of the Italian and German Far Right were very different.

The wartime Axis "Pact of Steel" was purely tactical as far as Mussolini was concerned, Signor Andriola told *La Stampa*. Historians had "preferred to ignore the continuous and obsessive hostility which Mussolini felt towards the German world".

The debate over Italy's war-time relationship with Germany comes at a time when relations between Rome and Bonn are tense because of German doubts over Italy's ability to qualify for the single European currency. Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, raised eyebrows in Bonn earlier this month by saying that some members of Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democrats were making a "serious and dangerous mistake" by opposing Italian membership of the euro.

Signor Andriola traces Mussolini's dislike of Germany to his youthful period as editor of a socialist newspaper in Trento, in Alto Adige. "He learned German and admired Goethe and Hegel. But his hostility towards pan-Germanism in all its forms grew. He was terrified of the idea of a powerful and threatening Germany at the heart of Europe."

In the 1920s Hitler, who liked Mussolini, consulted Il Duce on how to make a

Fascist revolution. But Mussolini found *Mein Kampf* "a boring tome", and regarded Hitler's thought as "utterly incoherent". When the two first met in 1934, in Venice, Hitler was impressed by Mussolini's theatrical uniform and popular appeal, but Mussolini described the Führer as a "sexually suspect buffoon, with rouged cheeks, a limp handshake, and absurd facial movements which made his strands of hair take up comic positions. He is a gramophone with only seven tunes, and once he has finished playing them he starts all over again," Mussolini observed.

Franco De Felice, a rival historian, yesterday said that Signor Andriola had underestimated the extent to which they had more in common than differences. Signor Andriola agreed they had a common passion for ritual, myth, and regimented parades. But he said Fascist ideology purported to revive the glories of ancient Rome, whereas Nazism rested on an alleged rediscovery of Teutonic roots, with Italians seen as racially suspect.

He added that Mussolini adopted racial laws in Italy only after his invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 and his attempt to colonise Africa, remarking: "This racism is stuff for those blonde Germans, not for us."

Bonn tries to dispel fears of euro delay

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

THE uncertain future of Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister, cast a shadow yesterday over a Franco-German summit intended to dispel fears that European monetary union was drifting off course.

The political and economic problems dogging Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, contrast starkly with the high popularity ratings of Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister, and have prompted French commentators to spot a favourable shift in the Bonn-Paris axis. But the French are also worried that Germany, unable to box its way out of its enduring crisis, might move to delay the start of the euro.

Yesterday, both leaders emphasised their commitment to a punctual start to monetary union and said they were aiming to meet the entry targets on public sector debt. Later, a German statement said: "Germany and France stand unconditionally by the agreements already made and will do everything to fulfil the conditions for the introduction of the euro."

Shortly before M. Jospin

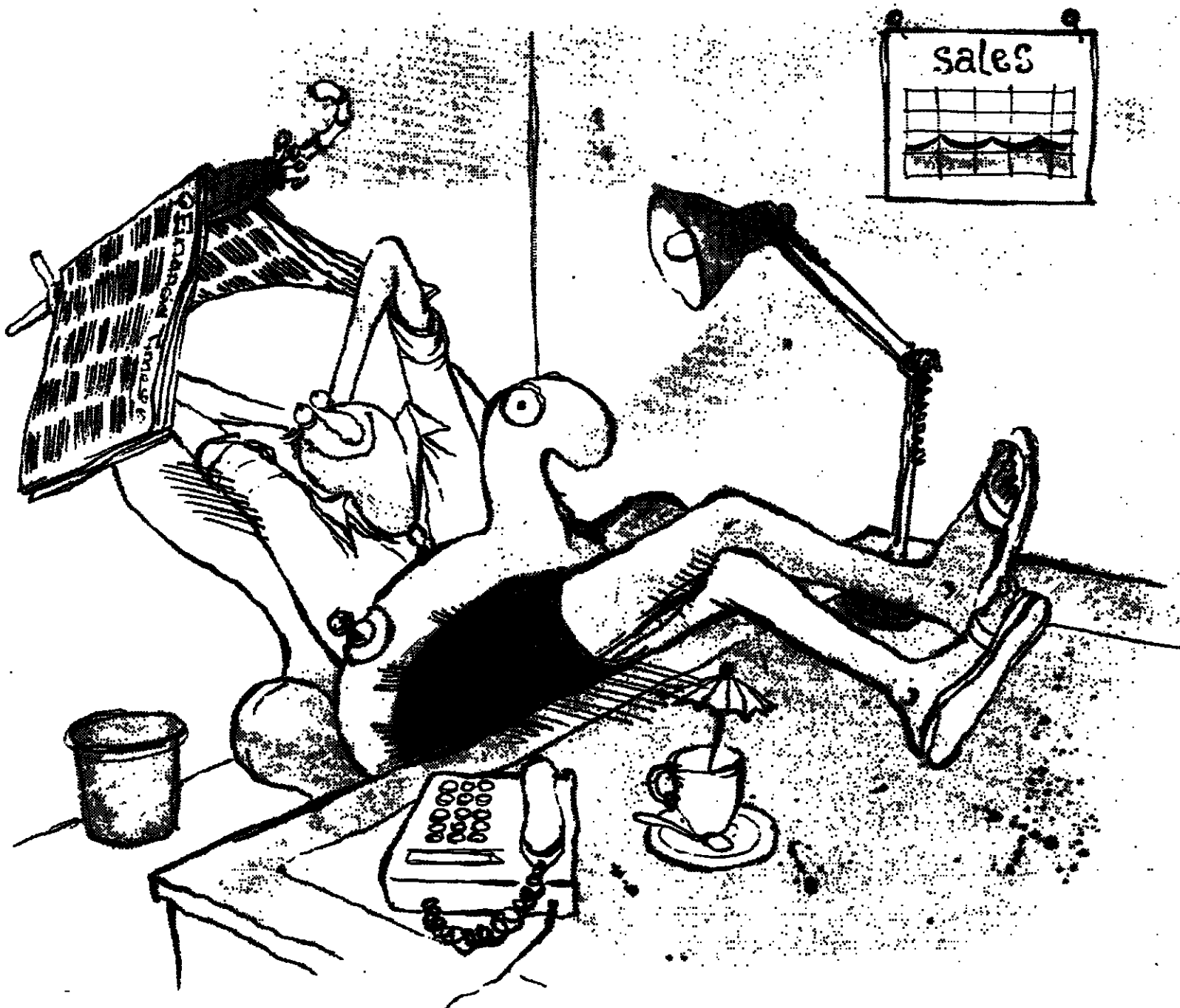


Waigel: symbol of the Government's weakness

arrived in Bonn, the French central bank said that it was possible the budget deficit would be on the 3 per cent of gross domestic product target for the euro. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development predicts that Germany will be slightly over at 3.2 per cent.

Herr Waigel's obvious exhaustion in his job has become a symbol of the weakness of the Kohl Government. His shaky position has also fuelled rumours that there is a row simmering in Bonn corridors over delaying the euro.

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THE TIMES FRIDAY AUGUST 29 1997

Botha calls for black party leader

FROM SAM KILBY
IN JOHANNESBURG

THE former Foreign Minister, R.F. Botha, nearly dismissed for predicting as the height of apartheid that South Africa would one day have a black president, said yesterday that a new National Party leader should be black.

His remarks came as party supporters were left with a choice between uncharismatic political technocrats, or Mr Botha, the hard-drinking, flamboyant former minister, after this week's resignation of F.W. de Klerk as leader.

As an obscure and discredited figure, Botha, after months of defection on the left of the party and the sudden exit of Mr de Klerk, the former President, Mr Botha, 65, threw his hat into the ring to challenge for the top job. His move came after a meeting of the party's executive, the Western Cape provincial assembly, who had been seen as the front runner, withdrew from the contest.

Those left in the field are white party officials who are seen as unlikely to be able to drag the party back into the limelight to challenge the African National Congress.

Mr Botha, author of South Africa's foreign policy during the years of "destabilisation" when Pretoria sponsored civil wars in Angola, Mozambique and the then Rhodesia, has worked hard to shed his image as purveyor of apartheid's most loyal servants.

After the 1994 elections he was quick to get rid of his suit and switch into traditional African garb. He has insisted he was very much a "son of Africa".

His prodigious energy guaranteed him the job as Minister of Mines when the party joined the ANC-dominated Government of National Unity in 1994.

He lost his portfolio when Mr de Klerk withdrew from the coalition Government in June last year and has been anxious for a prominent new role in South Africa ever since.



Botha insists he is a "son of Africa".

Wary Beijing treads softly in Hong Kong

Two months after Britain's handover of sovereignty, China has made no major changes, James Fringie reports

THE grim-visaged statue of Queen Victoria still gazes down imperiously on picture-snapping Japanese tourists in Victoria Park, and Chinese tourists, the prosperous wives of taipans, still take tea at the posh Mandarin and Peninsula Hotels.

Thousands of Filipina maids have not been sent home, and they still gather like brightly plumaged birds in central areas to socialise at weekends. Red-faced stallions of the British community still reject to the exclusive Hong Kong Club, once an imperial bastion, to discuss the rollercoaster property and stock markets.

China's red flag is flying at a few strategic points in Hong Kong, symbolically, there is one over the Legislative Council building, in the garden of former Governor Chris Patten's now-empty official residence, Hong Kong's new flag, a baobab tree on a red background with China's five stars, dangles limply from a flagpole in the rain.

But two months after the British handover of sovereignty of the former colony to China, and despite Beijing's scrapping of the popularly elected legislature, the situation here is one of "fingers crossed, so far, so good", a senior Western diplomat said this week.

Until yesterday, Hong Kong had fought off assaults on its currency that sent the economy of Thailand and other South-East Asian nations reeling. "This place had more reason to have the jitters," one financial analyst noted. However, yesterday the Hang Seng index shed 240 per cent, or 372.48 points, to 15,161.47.

These are still very early days, the Western diplomat said. "But Beijing has taken a softly-softly approach and there has been no major change."

China's choice of Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region, the genial shipping magnate Tung Chee-hwa, may have seen to it that the Beijing-appointed legislature passed laws that could be used to

limit political expression in future. Nevertheless, he has said there would be elections for a new legislature next year.

Critics charge there will be impediments to keep the Democratic Party from gaining the number of seats it had in the disbanded legislature, and that Mr Tung and his "fat cats" — pro-China tycoons who are his closest advisers — will rule with as little input from the legislature as possible. Arthur Hacker, a local



Ma Yuzhen was a brilliant choice. He is everybody's favourite cuddly communist.

historian and artist, said: "I expected the Chinese to come in and announce, 'We are the masters now', but it has been quite different. Everyone has gone out of their way to be polite — including taxi drivers for the first time. This has been a very carefully calibrated takeover."

At the main military garrison in central Hong Kong, still called the Prince of Wales Barracks, two soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) — almost the only

visible sign of a Chinese troop presence — on guard at the gate are less stolid and impassive than expected. They respond to the greeting *Ni Hao*, meaning "How are you", with a quick nod and a half-smile. "Thankfully, the PLA is keeping its armed personnel carriers well out of sight," one European businessman said.

The officers and men of the PLA here are not used to Western capitalist society yet, noted a Chinese source. "Sometime in the future when they understand how this society works, they may be seen more often, but only then."

Western envoys give Beijing high marks for appointing two sophisticated former ambassadors to Britain, Ma Yuzhen and Jiang Enzhu, to key posts in the arm of China's Foreign Ministry here, and at the Xinhua news agency which used to be Beijing's unofficial embassy in Hong Kong. Mr Ma addresses foreign business associations, reassuring his audience of a stable future and of Beijing's intention not to intervene, but to honour rigorously the "one country, two systems" policy initiated by Deng Xiaoping, the late Chinese leader.

"Ma was a brilliant choice," one diplomat said. "He is everybody's favourite cuddly communist, extremely good at putting forward the acceptable face of Chinese communism." Under Mr Jiang's stewardship, Xinhua will supposedly largely revert to reporting news, though some Hong Kong residents say it conducts other functions such as intelligence-gathering. Demonstrations calling for the release of detained Chinese dissidents have not stopped, though they are now held outside Mr Tung's office rather than at Xinhua. "We were told before not to interfere in China's



A pedestrian stands on a bus stop sign to avoid floods in central Hong Kong. People unhappy about the handover say that the record rainfall is God weeping.

internal affairs, but we are part of China now so we should speak out when citizens are jailed for human rights activities," said Lee Cheuk-yan, an unseated former legislator and trade union leader.

There have also been demonstrations outside the office of the Foreign Ministry commissioner. "It is unusual for our staff, but it is something we should get used to," a Chinese source said. "China will not interfere in Hong Kong's internal affairs and way of life. It is crucial that Taiwan sees that such a system can work, so we will do

nothing to upset it. Already Taiwan seems to show small signs that it understands this." With reunion with Taiwan in mind, Chinese officials seem genuine in not wanting to interfere. But with China's emphasis on control and fear of disorder, it would be unusual if it did not ultimately take a more hands-on approach.

So far, Hong Kong's border with China remains sealed, residents say, and there are fewer Chinese tourists. "Numbers of our officials have asked to visit Hong Kong since July 1, but we have kept them out, a Chinese source declared. There is no guarantee that all

this will not change in the future, analysts point out. The British still get high marks for a dignified exit. "They showed they were a big country in spirit," said an 85-year-old Hong Kong Chinese woman.

There has been no let up in the rain that cascaded on the handover ceremonies, setting a new wet weather record in the former colony.

Those who lack China's takeover say the downturn is washing away 156 years of the shame of British imperialism. Those who regret the handover say it is "God weeping".

'Rabin ready for deal on Golan Heights'

FROM ROSS DUNN
IN JERUSALEM

YITZHAK RABIN, the Israeli Prime Minister assassinated in 1995, agreed in principle to discuss pulling out of the Golan Heights in return for suitable peace and security arrangements with Syria, a former Israeli negotiator said yesterday.

Tamar Rabinovich, Israeli Ambassador to the United States and former head of negotiations with Syria, made the disclosure after publication of secret minutes of the talks. He confirmed a report in *Haaretz* that Rabin laid out terms for a deal in 1993 and 1994 with Warren Christopher, the former US Secretary of State.

Rabin told Mr Christopher that he was ready to negotiate a withdrawal of Israeli troops to the borders Israel occupied before capturing the Golan from Syria on June 4, 1967. The condition was that Syria was prepared to accept his terms in the Golan Heights: true peace, full diplomatic relations and open borders. If so, Rabin would have agreed to discuss negotiating a withdrawal from an area including the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee and part of the east bank of the River Jordan.

That message was relayed to President Assad of Syria. But a willingness to discuss a territorial compromise was apparently not enough to entice the Arab leader. He wanted more than an agreement to talk: he wanted an Israeli commitment to give up the Golan Heights. As Mr Rabinovich put it: "Assad didn't want to smell the meal, he wanted to consume the meal."

Mr Rabinovich said of any possible future negotiations that the position of Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, was not much different from Rabin's. Mr Netanyahu had said that the depth of any peace treaty with Syria would be in relation to the depth of border security arrangements.

Kinshasa obstructs UN human rights mission

BY PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA AND JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A UNITED NATIONS mission of inquiry into the alleged massacre of tens of thousands of Rwandan refugees in the former Zaire earlier this year, has been thrown into jeopardy within days of the team's arrival in Kinshasa.

John Mills, a spokesman in Geneva, said the UN had received a letter from the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo raising "a number of serious concerns which could call into question the ability of the investigative mission to continue".

In the letter two senior

ministers are said to have objected to the head of the mission, Atsu-Koffi Amega, a former Chief Justice in Togo, refused to give visas to the six security officers and the 23-strong team and demanded that it work with an African group.

The two ministers also refused permission for UN guards to accompany the investigators into the countryside, effectively preventing the team from searching for suspected mass graves.

The letter drew immediate criticism at UN headquarters where it was denounced by Sir

John Weston, the British Ambassador, in his capacity as this month's president of the 15-nation Security Council.

Muhammad Sahnoun, the UN special envoy for the Great Lakes region, was yesterday seeking an urgent meeting with Congo's President Kabila in an attempt to save the three-month mission.

Kinshasa is the capital of a new UN office in the capital under Robin Kinloch, a British development expert. A World Bank mission to assess the country's economic needs has also been put on hold.

Mir team prepares for spacewalk to carry out repairs

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

THE commander of Russia's space station Mir and a British-born NASA astronaut yesterday began preparations for a potentially hazardous spacewalk next week to patch up the ageing orbiter.

According to mission control, Anatoli Solovoyov, the veteran cosmonaut, and Michael Foale, the Cambridge-educated astronaut, were readying themselves and their equipment for a mission scheduled for Wednesday.

The men will put on spacesuits and crawl along handrails on Mir's hull to locate where the Spektr module was punctured when it was rammed in June by a supply ship.

The accident, the worst in a litany of mishaps on Mir this year, led to the evacuation of the module and the loss of nearly half the spacecraft's electricity. Mr Foale lost all his research work.

Last week Pavel Vinogradov, the third crew member, reconnected vital power cables from Spektr to Mir and now the plan is to repair and rehabilitate the module itself.

Nasa has still not given final approval for its astronaut to take part in the spacewalk and is likely to delay a decision until a dress rehearsal on Monday.

Nevertheless, the two men began the lengthy preparations needed for the mission, including reading manuals, checking equipment and performing arm exercises.

In addition to planned work on Spektr, the crew has used the renewed power supplies to reactivate two other modules on Mir, Kvant2 and Kristall, where much of the scientific research work is usually conducted.

"In Kristall they will gradually turn on equipment," said a mission control spokeswoman. "Other than the heater, ventilation and fan nothing was on before today, but now they will turn on the scientific devices and test their reliability."

Kristall is also the only module with the correct docking port for the American space shuttle and it must be in full working order by the time Atlantis is scheduled to dock with Mir late next month.

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Radio incites Serbs to attack Nato force

AMERICAN troops yesterday fired teargas at angry crowds of Bosnian Serbs as the leadership struggle between President Plavsic and Radovan Karadzic, her predecessor, threatened to spill over into widespread violence pitting Serbs against one another and against Nato forces.

Several towns in eastern Republika Srpska, Dr Karadzic's shrinking stronghold, are in open revolt against Mrs Plavsic and the Nato Stabilisation Force troops they believe she is colluding with. The worst trouble yesterday centred on Brcko, the port on the Sava River that straddles the strategic ten-mile corridor that joins Republika Srpska's eastern and western halves.

Two US soldiers were injured in the town when they were beaten by demonstrators. Neither was seriously hurt. There were also attacks on Nato soldiers and United Nations police in Zvornik, deeper into eastern territory and on the border with Serbia, and in the nearby town of Bijelina. The trouble began on Wednesday night as Nato troops entered Brcko police station to find pro-Karadzic police suspected of fomenting unrest in Brcko and a crowd gathered outside. Local police fired in the air but as more people spilled on to the streets the local authorities began sounding air raid sirens. Brcko radio exhorted listeners to attack Nato troops and UN international police.



International troops have become targets in the Bosnian power struggle. Tom Walker writes from Brcko

UN monitors were unable to say if the bid to install police loyal to Mrs Plavsic had been successful, and the 58 monitors themselves had to be evacuated by Nato troops after spending ten hours barricaded in their office.

Similar scenes were repeated in Bijelina, where the president of the Republika Srpska assembly, Gojko

Klickovic, appealed on local radio for people to "continue your aggression until the situation is resolved". Groups of Karadzic supporters dutifully pelted Nato vehicles with stones throughout the day.

By yesterday morning the situation in Brcko was running out of control, with crowds outside the police station and down at the river crossing into Croatia. UN international police vehicles were systematically smashed, and an Egyptian police monitor had to be escorted by the Nato troops to safety after he was attacked by a mob.

American helicopters dropped teargas canisters, putting most of the crowds to flight but cementing the anti-Nato sentiment. By midday angry, drunken mobs roamed

the streets, smashing what international property they could find.

Foreigners were taunted by the Serb mobs and told to leave town or face the consequences.

"Bastards, leave us in our homes," they screamed. By early evening a throng of around a thousand was converging on the Nato barricades sealing the entrance to the bridge.

Robert Farrand, the American human rights administrator in Brcko, said the mob was "bent on destroying the Dayton peace process".

He said the "behaviour by the Serb media was outrageously irresponsible and dangerous".

□ **Banja Luka:** President Milosevic's plane has been cleared to land here today, airport officials said. Rumours have circulated for days that the Yugoslav President would visit the town, stronghold of Mrs Plavsic, to intervene in the power struggle opposing her and pro-Karadzic forces. (AFP)



Serbs taunt a Nato soldier yesterday as he unrolls razor wire at a checkpoint in the Bosnian town of Brcko

WORLD IN BRIEF

Yeltsin sacks chief military reformer

Moscow: President Yeltsin dismissed Yuri Baturin, the mastermind of his military reforms, from his post as head of the Defence Council yesterday (Richard Besson writes). The Kremlin said that Mr Baturin had been relieved of his duties but would remain a presidential aide. He will be replaced by Andrei Kokoshin, who has served as First Deputy Defence Minister.

The reshuffle appeared unlikely to affect the pace or scope of reforms planned for the armed forces, which face cuts of about half a million troops, including 500 generals. The course of the reform programme is in the hands of General Igor Sergeev, the Defence Minister appointed this year.

In other Cabinet moves, Anatoli Adamishin, former Ambassador to London, was appointed minister in charge of relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States and Natalia Dementyeva was named Culture Minister.

41 die in Venezuela jail riot

At least 41 inmates were killed and 22 seriously injured during a prison riot at a high security jail in remote Venezuelan jungle (Gabriella Gamini writes). The riot in the El Dorado jail broke out in the early hours after a shoot-out between prison guards and a group of inmates who tried to escape. Prisoners turned on guards who foiled the escape attempt by a drug trafficker and three others. Police said the jail, which is surrounded by rainforest and is at least 200 miles from the nearest town, was totally destroyed by fire. "We found some of the charred remains of prisoners in their cells. But many of them were killed in the shoot-out," said Hilarion Cardozo, the Justice Minister.

Frenchman grandfather at 32

Toul: Franck Petitdemange, right, a hospital cook, has become France's youngest grandfather at the age of 32 and four months, according to the Guinness Book of Records. His daughter Peggy, a 16-year-old high school student, gave birth to a 7½ lb baby girl named Mallauray in this eastern French town yesterday. The father, Kevin, is also 16. The previous record was held by Jean-Calude Vedis from Lezigne, western France, who became a grandfather at the age of 33. (AFP)



Bonn plea for landmines ban

Geneva: Germany, vowing to destroy all its anti-personnel landmines by the end of the year, said it wanted a global ban on the weapons. Günther Seibert, German envoy to the UN-sponsored disarmament conference, said here that Bonn was committed to the "Ottawa Process" aimed at reaching a treaty in December. But it also saw a vital role for the Geneva forum, which has been struggling towards a global landmines ban, he said. China and Russia are participating only in the UN talks, meaning that a universal ban can be clinched only in Geneva. (Reuters)

Rape 'was woman's fault'

Manila: The Philippines Supreme Court acquitted a Filipino tour guide who had been sentenced to death for raping a 30-year-old British actress, saying that the woman was at fault. The woman had been half asleep in a dark cottage in a beach resort in the western island of Palawan in 1994 when Silvano Salas entered and had sex with her. She assumed it was her boyfriend who was out spear-fishing. The court ruled that she was at fault since she "had the opportunity to ascertain the identity of the man but preferred to allow things to happen as they did". (AFP)

McVeigh lawyer is replaced

Denver: An appeals court replaced Stephen Jones, left, as chief lawyer for Timothy McVeigh with another member of the defence team. McVeigh, sentenced to die for the April 19, 1995, bombing in Oklahoma City that killed 168 people, had wanted Mr Jones off the case, contending that the lawyer had told him lies and "screwed up badly". Mr Jones denied the allegations but said McVeigh had become so angry and self-destructive that he felt he could no longer represent him. (AP)



Celtic tomb found in Poland

Warsaw: Archaeologists have discovered the tomb of a Celtic warrior dating back to the second century BC in northern Poland, a find which suggests that Celtic civilisation was more widespread than previously thought. The fairly well-preserved tomb in the Kujawy region contains the remains of a man 6ft 3in tall, a sword 3ft 3in in length and several spearheads. Ryszard Grygiel, the head of the team, said. The find "attests to a larger expansion of Celts towards the north", he said. (AFP)

Indian has his work cut out

Bombay: An Indian government employee has got back his job after a 25-year court battle, just in time for his retirement. A court ruled that Govind Gurav be given back his job as a junior mechanic and receive compensation of 200,000 rupees (£3,500). Mr Gurav is 58, the official age of retirement, and would have earned 350,000 rupees during the period. He was sacked in 1973 after the scheme he was working on came to an end. (AFP)

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Upstart King eyes up burger crown

By Tunku Varadarajan

BIG MAC, the heavy-weight champion of the fast-food world, is squaring up for a searing punch-up against Big King, a cocky new challenger from the stable of Burger King.

Unveiled in New York yesterday, and on sale across America on Monday, the Big King is — as its candid name suggests — pretty darn big. In fact, so big is it that the Big Mac itself no longer fits in the size stakes, stands emphatically dwarfed.

The Burger-clone's beef patties weigh an imposing 2.8oz, compared with Big Mac's 1.6oz. Burger King may be mining more meat for its new burgers, but it is certainly mining no words. "Get your Burger's worth", it is telling the nation in a raucous advertising campaign.

The company, owned by Grand Metropolitan, the British food and drink conglomerate, is spending \$20 million (£12.5 million) on saturation advertising, beginning on Sunday, which is intended to blitz those captive American families who will be glued to their televisions over the Labour Day weekend.

American commercials are more direct than the ones in Britain. So Burger King is announcing that its new champ is "like a Big Mac, only it has more beef than bread". Other ads crow that the new burger is "just like a Big Mac, except that it's got 75 per cent more beef. And it's flame-broiled."

Yes, "flame-broiled" is regarded by gourmets as a tastier way to dish out those burgers than merely grilling them. The Big King, however, will sell at a paltry price. At a bewilderingly cheap 99 cents — as opposed to \$1.98 for the jewel in the McDonald's crown — gullets can scoff two Big Kings for the price of one Big Mac.

Charles Ebeling, a spokesman for McDonald's, however, reacted to the latest threat with a flourish of his chef's hat. He said: "There is only one Big Mac, and nobody else can sell one. Nothing else has the taste of a Big Mac, which is more than the sum of its parts. It's a brand that is the gold standard of hamburgers."

However, insiders say the Burger King move has McDonald's rattled.



Political life of the Kennedys draws to a close

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

THE Kennedys may have come close to the end of their political road, yesterday when Congressman Joseph Kennedy, son of the late Robert Kennedy, announced that he will not run for Governor of Massachusetts.

Mr Kennedy, the only clan member of the post-John F. Kennedy generation still in politics, had once hoped to walk into the governor's mansion in a state regarded by Americans as a Kennedy fiefdom. But, buffeted relentlessly by press criticism brought on as much by the misdeeds of his cousins as by his messy divorce from Sheila Rauch, Mr Kennedy has rapidly lost ground in recent months.

So stark has been the decline in his fortunes that many were predicting that he might not even secure the Democratic Party's nomination for next year's gubernatorial election.

Mr Kennedy's electoral fate was key to the continued presence in American politics

of the Kennedy family. Senator Edward Kennedy, Mr Kennedy's uncle, is the only other member of the dynasty who is an elected politician. With the younger man's withdrawal from the Massachusetts Governor's race, the prospects of a single Kennedy remaining in politics once the senator retires are dimming.

Mr Kennedy's woes began when his former wife accused him of bullying her into conceding an annulment of their marriage. She wrote an acerbic account of their marital breakdown in a book, published in May, eliciting from him a public apology.

Mr Kennedy's ill fortune worsened when, this month, news broke that he had held an illegal fireworks party at the family compound in Hyannisport. Fireworks are prohibited in Massachusetts and the television for Governor apologising for breaking the law inflicted a gaping wound in Mr Kennedy's prestige.

Most damaging of all were the allegations levelled against Michael, Mr Kennedy's brother, of an illegal sexual liaison with an underage babysitter. At no stage did Mr Kennedy take a public stand on the matter, allowing the widely held perception that the Kennedys were an amoral tribe.

One family member who tried to check that perception only made matters worse. Writing in his magazine *George*, John F. Kennedy Jr described Mr Kennedy and Michael as "poster boys for bad behaviour". A public attack by his own cousin, it seems, was the last straw.



Joseph Kennedy: will not run for Governor



Manolete: he is still a figure of controversy among lovers of the corrida

Spanish tribute to lost legend of the bull-ring

FROM GILES TREMELT IN MADRID

MANOLETE, the legendary matador, continues to cause controversy as Spain marks the 50th anniversary today of his death after being gored by a bull.

The matador from Córdoba, in the South, created a school of bullfighting which now dominates the corrida and which purists still blame for a decline in standards. "Manolete ignored the old rules," Joaquín Vidal, bullfight critic of *El País*, said. "Later generations have considered that the real artists were certain bullfighters who broke with the Manolete school."

Manolete, whose real name was Manuel Rodríguez, was the son and grandson of bullfighters. His father died when he was six and he himself started fighting at the age of twelve. The young matador brought new drama and even greater risk to the bull-ring. His unorthodox style, upright, fluid and close in to the bull, required nerves of steel and great skill. The purists did not like it, but the crowds flocked to see him.

He was the first genuinely popular figure of bullfighting. His wealth and fame brought admiration and, at a time when Spain was poverty-stricken after the destruction wrought by the Civil War, great envy outside the bullfighting world.

Manolete's every move was followed by the press. He was nicknamed "El Monstruo", the monster. His wealth and his long-running affair with a cabaret artist, Lupe Sino, were the fodder of

popular gossip. Shortly before his death Manolete, tired of the treatment he was receiving at home, threatened to leave Spain. He had already spent one season fighting in Mexico, where he was also a popular idol. He had only just turned 30 when he met a bull called Islero in the bull-ring at Linares in southern Spain.

Manolete was famed for his skill and accuracy in carrying out "la suerte", the moment of death. But as he sank his sword into the bull's neck, Islero flicked his head upwards, opening a huge gash in Manolete's right thigh.

The bullfighting world's bible, *Los Toros de Cossío*, blames the fighter for carrying out the kill too sluggishly. More recent reports suggest that Islero should not have been that dangerous because it had been illegally shaved before the fight. Manolete was operated on and received a blood transfusion. The wound was not considered lethal. But over the next 24 hours he died a slow death, gradually losing all feeling in his body. The son of the local doctor who treated him said recently that it was not the bull that finally killed Manolete but an infected blood plasma taken to Linares by a Madrid doctor. The present top bullfighter, Enrique Ponce, yesterday marked the anniversary of Manolete's death by fighting in the same bull-ring in Linares, against two bulls from the same breeding farm that produced Islero.

British MP attacks Whitehall's Montserrat policy

FROM TOM RHODES IN PLYMOUTH, MONTSERRAT

BERNIE GRANT, the Labour MP for Totnes, last night criticised the British Government for trying to resolve Montserrat's woes from the relative safety of Whitehall.

Arriving at the makeshift heliport in the northern safe zone of the volcanic island, Mr Grant said that his Government could not determine what was needed for Montserrat unless they were prepared to visit the island.

"What I do not accept is that the British Government can stay in Whitehall and determine what is appropriate for the people of Montserrat."

His statement appeared to be a barbed criticism of Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, forced to hand over responsibility for the beleaguered island to a task force set up by the Prime Minister after snubbing an invitation to visit the dependent territory. She also accused Caribbean leaders of deliberately misrepresenting British offers of help.

But Mr Grant said that his criticism was not directed at Ms Short but at the Government in general. He said matters had improved with the creation of the task force under the supervision of Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary. He subsequently attempted to backtrack on his criticism of Ms Short and blamed the previous Conservative Government of John Major for failing to implement proper aid programmes when the volcano first started to erupt.

In what he said was a "semi-official"

visit, Mr Grant was due to visit school and church shelters and talk to scientists and government officials. He was immediately flown by helicopter over the Soufrière Hills volcano, accompanied by David Brandt, the Chief Minister.

The volcano, which began to erupt two years ago after four centuries of relative dormancy, continued yesterday to puff small gas plumes into the sky. Activity has decreased in recent days with less pyroclastic flows being recorded by scientists.

Star of Clinton Cabinet faces corruption charges

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE indictment of a former official in the Clinton Administration's first term was seen yesterday as having caused what was probably irreparable damage to the career of a once rising star.

Mike Espy, Agriculture Secretary from 1993 to 1994, was charged late on Wednesday with accepting \$35,000 (£21,700) in gifts from food businesses, lying to federal investigators, tampering with witnesses and ordering an agriculture department employee to alter a document during the investigation.

Mr Espy is the highest ranking member of the Administration to be charged with a crime. If found guilty, he would be the first Cabinet member since the Watergate era to be convicted of a criminal act while in office.

Witness tampering carries a maximum sentence of ten years in prison and the other charges five years.

The charges were brought after a three-year investigation costing more than \$9 million. They reinforce an image that the Administration has been eager to shake off — that President Clinton and his aides have brought the incestuous Southern links between politics and business to Washington.

As Mississippi's first black congressman, Mr Espy attracted nationwide attention as a clever, engaging politician, a moderate Democrat who could appeal to black and white to conquer a former Republican stronghold.

When Mr Clinton brought him into his first-term Cabinet, along with many other

Southern politicians, there was talk that Mr Espy might one day run for Governor of Mississippi or even the Vice-Presidency. Mr Espy, now 43, resigned in 1994 as allegations of the payments and gifts began to emerge, but even this did not quash recent speculation about a comeback.

Prosecutors say Mr Espy, a passionate sports fan, broke the law by accepting tickets to football, basketball and tennis matches from companies he was regulating. They say he accepted gifts including luggage, flights in corporate jets, cash payments to his girlfriend and a \$10,000 contribution to his brother Henry's Congressional campaign.

Donald Smaltz, the prosecutor, is not required to show that Mr Espy returned the favours.

Minorities lose special status

Giles Whittell in Los Angeles sees King's dream shattered

IF HE were watching from the hereafter, Martin Luther King would have marked the anniversary of his most famous speech yesterday with bitter-sweet reflections at best.

Thirty-four years to the day after the great civil rights leader told a Washington crowd of his dream of racial harmony, a ban on preferences for blacks and other ethnic minorities went into effect in California, prompting an angry march across San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge led by the Rev Jesse Jackson.

The "I have a dream" speech unfolded before nearly a quarter of a million people. Mr Jackson, who considers himself King's ideological heir, expected barely 3,000 at his demonstration — just enough to snarl up the city's traffic.

Defenders of so-called affirmative action have stiffened their resolve to fight its abolition since recently released figures showed the enrollment

of ethnic minorities plunging in some of the nation's most prestigious public universities. Last month, the medical school at the University of California's San Diego campus conceded that in its first set of admissions since the university unilaterally abolished affirmative action, not one black was among the new entrants.

On Wednesday, the University of Texas law school, which has followed the Californian lead, announced that enrollment of blacks was down in one year from 31 to four out of a total of 486 new students. The number of new students of Mexican origin has nearly halved, to 26. The university was "greatly distressed", Michael Sharlot, dean of the law school, said.

California's affirmative action laws created race-based quotas in public education and employment, and required that 15 per cent of state contracts — worth some \$4 bil-

lion (£2.5 billion) a year — be awarded to firms owned by ethnic minorities. Another 5 per cent of contracts had to go to firms owned by women.

Nationwide, the anti-affirmative action movement has been led by Ward Connerly, a black businessman who sits on the University of California's board of regents. Backed by California's Governor, Pete Wilson, Mr Connerly won a ban on quotas in the state's sprawling public college system last year before leading a campaign for Proposition 209, which outlawed them in principle across the state. On Tuesday, a federal appeals court cleared the way for the proposition to become law.

Mr Connerly's crusade is rich with irony. The policies he targets have been cherished for decades in liberal circles as a vital leg-up for the disadvantaged and a crowning achievement of the civil rights movement. Yet he has successfully attacked them with King's precise sentiments — that Americans should be judged "not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character".

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I grew up not wanting children, the same way that I didn't aspire to be a pilot or a nuclear physicist

A generation of women is choosing not to have children. Joan Smith explains why

Hold the front page: women have stopped having babies! Well, not all of them — but enough to make people sit up and take notice. And we are not talking about maiden aunts or women whose fiancés died tragically in the war. No, the plain fact is that one in five women in developed countries like Britain is living out her adult life without bearing a child.

This is, we are told, a bad thing. Women are being forced to choose, columnists and feature writers say, between careers and babies; women without children talk apologetically about what they have given up, about their regret that the right man never came along or the demands of jobs that made motherhood impossible for them.

But what's this? As the birthrate in Britain and other European countries drops, it is becoming apparent that this is not the whole story. In Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and Germany, the birthrate is at an unprecedented low of between 1.5 and 1.4 children per couple.

In traditionally Roman Catholic countries like Italy and Spain, it is even lower, at 1.3. These figures cannot be explained solely as evidence that a generation of women are reluctantly giving up motherhood for the sake of their careers. Some of them, it is clear, are choosing not to have children for no other reason than that they

don't want them. For centuries, childlessness in women was a curse, even though childbirth was at best painful and at worst fatal. Yet women everywhere dreaded the discovery that they were "barren", a baleful adjective that appears over and over again in the Authorised Version of the Bible.

In this context the proposition that, given the choice, some women would prefer not to have children was virtually unthinkable. Without reliable methods of contraception, the vast majority could and did have them as a matter of course.

What most women did inevitably become confused with what they wanted to do, so the myth of a universal maternal instinct was born. So unquestioned was it that even the great birth control pioneers of the early 20th century concerned themselves with regulating the number of children individual women gave birth to rather than the heretical notion that contraception might give them the choice not to have any at all.

It was not until the 1960s that the idea that some women might not want children began to be voiced even in a hesitant way. What women found almost impossible to say, even in the heady days of the early 1970s, was that they simply did not want children.

This was so much the case that the vast social change already beginning to get



Mother love still has an iconic place in Western culture, in theory at least, to the point where the true nature of the relationship is hardly ever examined.

under way, with the arrival of the oral contraceptive pill, happened furtively and took almost everyone by surprise. Not only did the birthrate decline in affluent Western countries, but the proportion of women living out their reproductive years without ever giving birth began to rise rapidly.

According to a recent publication by the Government's Office for National Statis-

tics, "this proportion has increased sharply over time and it is now expected that over a fifth of women born in 1967 will still be childless when they reach 40".

So what happened? Is there something radically different about women born after the Second World War, something that marks them out from every other generation that has gone before?

The fear that has stalked the planet has been over-population, and the prospect of a declining birthrate in the developed world might be seen as a modest but welcome contribution to dealing with this increasingly urgent problem.

But that is far from being the whole story. When an individual woman says she does not want to have children, she immediately encounters a spectrum of hostile reactions ranging from disbelief ("you'll change your mind when you're older") to condescension ("you don't know what you're missing"), from accusations of solipsism ("have you always been so selfish?") to full-frontal assaults on her femininity ("what's wrong with you?").

I can speak with some authority on this subject because I am one of those women: I have no idea whether I am fertile, sub-fertile or incapable of conceiving, for I have never been interested enough to find out. If I have a biological clock, it must be silent and digital, for I have never heard it tick, even though I am in my early forties.

Over the years, however, I have become wearily familiar with all the responses outlined above, and with some bizarre variants such as "How dare you not have children when other women are desperate to get pregnant?" Equally popular is a testy demand that I should lie about my reason for not having children, that I should hint at lengthy and unsuccessful courses of fertility treatment, thereby emphasising the point that childlessness is acceptable for a woman as long as it isn't voluntary.

Obviously I could lower my eyes, take out a handkerchief and pretend that I am resigned to my barren state. Or I could go along with the line of a well-meaning friend who said she admired my decision not to have children because it was one of the most difficult a woman could make. But it isn't, not for me. I grew up not wanting children in the same way that I didn't aspire to be an airline pilot or a nuclear physicist: there was no painful soul-searching or introspection, just a useful and early piece of self-knowledge I have always trusted and acted upon.

On its own, this lack of interest in having children might not have equipped me to withstand the astonishing degree of social pressure on women to conform to a single pattern. The deciding factor was knowing from an early age exactly what I

did want, that I was absolutely impassioned about being a writer.

It is not that I thought writing and motherhood were incompatible, just that having such a fierce ambition threw into shadow all the things — including having children — that I did not want to do. I have never felt the need to apologise for this, I did not enjoy being a child, and I make when people accuse me of not realising what I am missing: I was one for what seemed a maddeningly long time, about a third of my life so far, and leaving behind that infantile and adolescent world was a tremendous relief.

There is a hopeless confusion that surrounds the subject of voluntary childlessness. If having children and grandchildren is so universally rewarding, why is it selfish to deny oneself the pleasure of

beatific glow; mother love still has an iconic place in Western culture, in theory if not reality, to a point where the true nature of the relationship is hardly ever examined.

This is that mothers (and many fathers) have a narcissistic investment in their children: that sanctions forms of behaviour which, to an outside observer, are quite clearly motivated by self-interest or the narrow interests of the family group.

Telling some of the reasons people give for deciding to have children in the first place: to save a failing marriage, to perpetuate their genes, so they will have someone to look after them in their old age.

Once this aspect of the debate is seen as the blind alley it really is, we arrive at a situation in which the real objection to women who decide not to have children can be unmasked. If women do not conform to the expected pattern — if, crucially, they are not all looking after children for at least part of their adult lives — what else might they do? Pursue their own interests? Compete with men?

For centuries, it could be safely assumed that the vast majority of women would spend the bulk of their pre-menopausal lives pregnant or bringing up children. This was, in effect, a highly efficient way of confining them to the domestic sphere. Even today, as we approach the third millennium, it is still widely assumed that the working patterns of most women will be different from those of men: interrupted by maternity leave and career breaks, disquieted by promotion by the need to job-share or work part-time. But what is the effect if a fifth of the female population decides not to take this route?

The consequences are far-reaching. Some women are already able to compete with men in the employment market on completely equal terms, but this is not even the half of it. What has been demolished is nothing less than the comfortable assumption that women can be treated, as they have been from time immemorial, as a single homogeneous class.

I have always been puzzled by the extent to which it is assumed that every woman in the world, regardless of her race or class or education or personality, wants to do exactly the same thing. Not any more. Birth statistics and population tables may not appear exciting at first glance, but their message, in this instance, is both consistent and revolutionary. All women are not the same. This is good news. It makes life more interesting. Get used to it.

Adapted from *Different for Girls: How Culture Creates Women* by Joan Smith (Chant & Windus, £10.99, published September 4)

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SBC hit by record £480,000 fine

Bank severely reprimanded by watchdog for compliance failures

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE Securities and Futures Authority yesterday hit Swiss Bank Corporation with a record fine and a severe reprimand after the bank admitted two serious compliance failures.

SBC was ordered to pay a fine of £300,000 and £12,000 in costs for failing to restrain its market-makers from building an 8.2 per cent stake in Yorkshire Electricity in late 1994. At the same time, its corporate finance arm was selling to clients controversial cash performance notes (CPNs) in Yorkshire. The

bank was also fined a further £80,000 and ordered to pay £55,000 in costs for share trades made last autumn while liquidating the Kelowna European Privatisation Investment Trust.

Richard Farrant, chief executive of the SFA, said: "Managing and controlling the different parts of an integrated investment house in order to ensure fair treatment of clients and other market participants is challenging. SBC failed the test." Mr Farrant added a

warning to other securities firms that the SFA would "persistently pursue and judge harshly" similar cases, even if a breach of the rules had not been intended.

SBC said that the SFA had acknowledged that the bank and its staff had acted in good faith and that there had been no intention to breach principles laid down by the Securities and Investments Board.

But the bank added that it had taken very seriously the identified errors in implemen-

tation and monitoring procedures. The SFA report concluded that SBC had failed to follow and control its Chinese Wall procedures — which ensure the separation of the trading and corporate finance arms of the company — when building the Yorkshire Electricity stake.

At the time, SBC's corporate finance arm was acting for a client that had expressed an interest in launching a bid for Yorkshire and a wish to use CPNs — which track the share

price — to hedge the cost of any takeover.

But SBC's market-making arm was allowed to build the 8.2 per cent stake — far more than was needed to hedge the exposure to CPNs — and the bank failed to "sufficiently probe the market-makers' reasons" for developing this long position.

The report stops short of singling out individuals for criticism, and SBC has taken no disciplinary action. Both John Wood, who is head of

equity trading, and Kath Cate, head of compliance, hold the same posts as they did in 1994. But the bank has made some reforms to its compliance procedure following the acquisition of Warburgs.

SBC ran into a storm of criticism at the time for its use of CPNs during the Trafalgar House bid for Northern Electric as well as for not disclosing its 8.2 per cent stake in Yorkshire.

Four separate investigations were launched into SBC's

handling of the Trafalgar bid, although SBC was cleared of any wrongdoing.

But the rules over the disclosure of large stakes built up as part of market-making operations have since been tightened.

The SFA also criticised SBC for allowing its dealing operations to have an adverse impact on share prices just before it auctioned off shares in the Keptel fund. The botched trade is believed to have cost SBC about £2 million as it was forced to offer Keptel immediate redress.

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Boots pays £9m to unload loss-making AG Stanley

By PAUL DURMAN

BOOTS is paying a venture capital firm nearly £9 million in cash and property to relieve it of the problems of dealing with AG Stanley, the loss-making owner of the Fads decorating and Homestyle home furnishings stores.

The £7.5 million of cash and £1.4 million of freehold property that Boots is handing over brings its total losses on Stanley's disposal to £180 million, although two thirds of this represents goodwill previously written off.

The purchaser, which has paid a nominal £1 to Boots, is Alchemy Partners, a recently formed firm run by Jon Moulton, who previously ran Schroder Ventures. Mr Moulton has taken over as chairman of Stanley and plans to embark on an immediate review that will consider closing many of the poorer perform-

ing shops. The 121 Fads and 201 Homestyle stores currently employ 2,400 people.

Stanley lost £11.8 million in the year to March on sales of £109.4 million. It has been loss-making for four years as the Fads chain of high street paint and wallpaper shops struggled against competition from out-of-town DIY superstores.

Stanley was acquired in 1989 as part of Ward White, the deal that also brought Halfords into the Boots group. It was run separately from Do It All, the larger but also loss-making DIY chain. Boots said it was not trying to sell Do It All.

Boots has invested millions opening new out-of-town Homestyle stores and Lord Blyth of Rowington, the group's chief executive, believes Stanley's prospects are much brighter than they have been. However, Boots does not believe Stanley will offer a sufficient return for its shareholders in the medium term.

Boots said that the Alchemy deal allows it to walk away from the liabilities of nearly 300 store leaseholds for a cash cost of less than £8 million. At the end of March, Stanley had net assets of £38.1 million.

As well as taking on four freehold properties, Alchemy will have an option to buy 27 leasehold properties currently valued at £7.5 million for only £3 million. These stores have not been transferred because they are leased to Boots, and landlords are unwilling to reassign them to Stanley or Alchemy.

Commentary, page 25



Stephen Bollenbach, left, president of HHC, and Peter George, of Ladbroke, could turn their alliance into a full merger

Ladbroke hints at Hilton merger

By DOMINIC WALSH

PETER GEORGE, chief executive of Ladbroke Group, admitted yesterday that a full merger between the hotel and gaming group and Hilton Hotels Corporation, its US partner, was a distinct possibility.

Last year, after months of speculation that HHC would launch a hostile bid, the two companies forged a strategic alliance, reuniting the Hilton hotel brand worldwide — a move that appeared to rule out a takeover or merger. How-

ever, Mr George confirmed: "These things change and there's some possibility there would be benefits in bringing the two companies together in time, although there's nothing on the agenda currently."

He hinted that the chances of a merger would be improved if HHC failed in its hostile \$11.5 billion (£7.1 billion) bid for ITT Corporation, although there would be major tax hurdles to overcome.

Hilton International, which owns Hilton rights outside the

US, helped Ladbroke to a 39 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £101.2 million in the first half of 1997 from turnover almost static at £1.95 billion. The hotel division improved profits by 9 per cent to £76.2 million after a £4.5 million hit from the strong pound. The rise was 20 per cent on a like-for-like basis. Betting and gaming saw a 31 per cent jump in profits to £56.9 million.

Ladbroke is known to be interested in Capital Corporation, the troubled London

casino operator, and Mr George said he continued to monitor developments.

Conversely, profits at Vernons Pools continued to decline and industry sources suggest a deal with Littlewoods, its larger rival, is being discussed.

Earnings per share were 6.54p (4.55p), and the interim dividend, payable on December 12, is up 8 per cent to 2.0p.

Bookies recover, page 24
City Diary, page 27

Dollar hit by nervous Wall St

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE dollar failed to benefit from a double dose of potentially positive news yesterday, scuppered by another nervous session on Wall Street.

The US currency showed little reaction either to a sharp upward revision to second-quarter US GDP growth to a 3.6 per cent annual rate from 2.2 per cent previously, or to remarks by Hans Tietmeyer, Bundesbank president, suggesting that a German rate rise was not imminent.

Herr Tietmeyer's comments that German rates remained an open question dented the market's strength briefly, leaving the dollar vulnerable to selling on Wall Street that took the Dow Jones industrial average more than 100 points lower at the opening. The Dow had recovered some ground towards the close of European trading, but, in London, the FTSE 100 closed 61.5 points lower at 4,845.4.

The dollar was quoted at about DM1.7980 in late European trading, down from DM1.8085 late on Wednesday. Sterling closed 1½ pence lower at DM2.9003.

Discount buy

In a move aimed at expanding its portfolio of struggling discount chains, Brown & Jackson, owner of Poundstretcher, yesterday launched an agreed £6.5 million cash offer for loss-making WEW, which trades as What Everyone Wants. Page 25

Airwaves

Saatchi and Saatchi is to launch a £1 million advertising campaign for Xfm, the new London radio station that goes on air at midday on Monday. The campaign aims at 18-35 year olds. Page 27

Firms 'face extra £2bn pension bill'

By CARL MORTSHED

- BRITAIN'S top companies could face a bill of up to £2 billion for increased pension costs after the abolition of the dividend tax credit to pension funds in Gordon Brown's July Budget.
- According to Lane Clark & Peacock, a leading firm of actuaries, the blow will fall most heavily on companies with big pension schemes such as BT, which could face a bill of £166 million, and ICI, which may need to top up its fund by £62 million.
- This week, WH Smith, the retailer, wrote off a £73 million pension prepayment in its balance sheet, warning that the Budget change created significant uncertainty over the valuation of its pension fund.
- The threat of cash calls from pension fund trustees could push employers to close down their final salary schemes and replace them with lower-quality money purchase schemes. "More people will have to rely on the welfare state in retirement," said the actuaries, who also pointed out that local authority pension schemes, the police and the fire service will come under funding

pressure. David Lane, a partner of the actuaries, said that Legal & General, the insurer, had shut down its final salary scheme.

Mr Lane cautioned that employees could be asked to foot the pensions bill. "A number of firms will be asking employees to pay a bit more to pension funds. This contrasts with Gordon Brown's Budget speech in which he suggested that companies could easily absorb the impact of the removal of ACT."

The impact of the loss of income will put pressure on actuaries to change the method of evaluating funds from the current estimate of dividend growth to a market valuation method. Mr Lane said: "Companies could put us under pressure to use more optimistic assumptions, but that will not help them in the long term."

In their annual survey, the firm criticised major companies, such as Hays and Reckitt & Colman, for inadequate and confusing disclosure of their accounting policies for pensions.

Tempus page 26

Road builders seek refund

THE Government faces a compensation bill of more than £6 million after the Highways Agency admitted liability for the costs of bidding for three privately financed road schemes dropped last month (Mark Court writes).

It is the first time that bidders have claimed compensation when projects under the Government's Private Finance Initiative have been cancelled.

The move follows the review of the PFI by Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General. The review stated: "When a decision is made not to proceed with a project, and that decision is not related to the viability of tenders received, contractors' bidding costs should be refunded."

The £113 million South Midlands network, the £142 million Wheel and Downland Network and the £138 million Cumbria to Bradford improvements were put on ice four weeks ago leaving the four consortiums bidding for each scheme to nurse costs of up to £500,000 each. The companies in the consortiums include John Laing, Costain, Balfour Beatty, Amec and Amey.

Waterstone keen to buy business back

By PATIENCE WHEATCROFT, CITY EDITOR

TIM WATERSTONE, the founder of the Waterstone's chain of bookshops, yesterday indicated that he would be keen to buy back the business from WH Smith.

As rumours persist that the WH Smith group may eventually have to consider a break-up of its various businesses, Mr Waterstone said: "I am very seriously worried about Waterstone's falling into the wrong

hands." He added that, if WH Smith were to become a seller, he "would be extremely interested in buying."

Mr Waterstone sold the business to WH Smith in 1989 for £42.2 million, netting a fifth of the proceeds for himself. Today, he reckons that the price could be between £200 million and £275 million. "I am delighted at how well it is performing," he said.

While the main WH Smith chain struggles, the group yesterday reported that Waterstone's sales were up by 11 per cent in the year to May 31, with profits up by a third, to £20 million. Group profits were £124 million.

Virgin has already signalled its desire to buy from WH Smith its majority holding in the Virgin Our Price record chain.

Although the company is insisting that it does not wish to instigate a break-up, investors have suggested the possibility. Keith Hamill, finance director, is thought to be more well disposed towards the idea than the rest of the WH Smith board.



Waterstone's eye on bookshops

Commentary, page 25

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

TUC starts regular talks with Tories

The other big issue surrounds the future of William Hill, the second-biggest bookmaker after the 2,000-strong Ladbrokes chain. William Hill, which has 1,530 shops, is the last major asset of debt-laden Brent Walker. The preferred bidder will not be named until the end of next month, but some of the indicative offers are thought to be as high as £780 million to £800 million, compared with estimates a year ago of £450 million.

The shortlist is thought to include Genting, a Malaysian group, Bass, which already owns the 850-strong Coral chain, and five venture capital groups: NatWest, Prudential, Chase House, Electra and Citicorp. When asked what he thought of the likely sale price, Mr George allowed himself a wry smile: "It's not unhelpful," he said.

about 700 closures to the lottery. In the wake of the lottery, the big groups have fought hard to reverse their fortunes, gradually rebuilding business by widening the range of games on offer, while improving the ambience in which punters bet. The deregulation of gaming was a boost, allowing two fruit machines per shop. Stanley Leisure reckons the move has added £2 million to betting profits, which would rise further if lobbying to raise the jackpot from its current £10 proved successful.

The launch, at the end of last year, of 49s, where players choose up to five out of 40 numbers, has also been significant. The daily televised draw is not only regaining lost business

but pulling in a wider range of punters, including women. Latest figures suggest that 49's and Lucky Choice, a similar numbers game based on the Irish Lottery outcome, now account for a combined 5 per cent of bookies' turnover.

Ladbrooke said 49's had helped to increase the number of betting transactions in the first half of the year by 4.3 per cent to £63 million, and stake per ship by 1.4 per cent to £5.01. Profits from retail betting rose from £32.5 million to £42.8 million and Mr George confirmed that new numbers-type games would be launched shortly. But the real potential lies in the industry's efforts to persuade the Government to allow side bets on the

the German electronics group, and 40 per cent by IIT Defence, the US communications specialist. The system is expected to be in service by 2002, with production extending to at least 2007.

David Elsbury, the Racal chief executive, said: "Archer Communications is the culmination of many years of work. Bowman is one of the world's largest and most advanced battlefield communications programmes.

"The Bowman solution has substantial export potential, the realisation of which should position Archer Communications as a predominant player

in the world tactical communications market."

Racal said it is contributing its VPT (VHF portable transceiver) radio to the system. These radios will be used on vehicles, in backpacks and in other portable configurations.

ITT Defence is also involved in building a similar system currently being designed for the US military forces. It will be possible to jointly operate the Bowman system and the Pentagon's Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System. Compatibility is believed to have been one of the main factors to influence the MoD's decision.

Under the new plans, Paris will transfer its 45.9 per cent holding in Dassault Aviation, the French military aircraft company, to Aérospatiale to pressure Dassault into accepting a merger of the two companies. This would allow

Bob Ellis provides the Phantom of the Opera sound system.

VISUAL ACTION, the Anglo- seen its shares fall from 263

American company that hires equipment for conferences and theatres, is ready to add a US listing if its London share price does not recover this year (Fraser Nelson writes). The company, which gets 60 per cent of its business from America, has after flotation last year in 1995, so Bob Ellis, chief executive, is touring UK institutions. Pre-tax profits were £8.67 million (£3.56 million) in the half to June 30. Earnings were 10.4p a share (6.3p) and the interim dividend is 1.7p (1.2p).

ING, the Dutch financial services group that bought the collapsed Barings Bank in 1995, yesterday made its largest foray into US banking with the purchase of Furman Selz, a medium-sized player on Wall Street.

ING is to pay \$600 million (£375 million) in cash for Furman Selz over three years, with two thirds of that amount coming before the end of this year. The tax benefits and the staggered payments effectively reduce the price to \$425 million in current dollars, ING said.

Furman Selz, which is owned by its employees, was founded in 1973 as an investment boutique specialising in research and has since grown into a full-service bank with operations in equity sales, strategic advisory services and asset management. The business has 780 employees and annual revenue of \$400 million. It has more than \$100 billion of assets under management.

Furman Selz is to be integrated with ING Barings's American operations, whose speciality is emerging markets activities. A spokeswoman said that ING has no plans to make further acquisitions in the American banking industry.

The purchase comes less than two months after ING bought Equitable of Iowa, the US life insurer, for \$2.2 billion.

SHARES in British-Borneo Petroleum slipped 5p to 468½p after a subsidiary won several blocks in lease sale 168 for the Western Gulf of Mexico at a cost of about \$5 million (£3 million). Two will be operated by British-Borneo and seven are in the higher risk/high potential Alaminos Canyon/Port Isabel area of the western gulf — a continuation of its 50-50 partnership with Texaco. Two blocks are with Norcen as operator and the remaining four are with the Walter Oil & Gas Consortium. All of the blocks are in deep-water areas.

THE US division of BNFL, the UK nuclear waste reprocessing group, has struck a £145 million deal to clean up a site in Tennessee. The UK reprocessing group has been increasing its international activities. Overall the group has £10 billion worth of international reprocessing business. The six-year contract boosts the subsidiary's £1.25 billion worth of reprocessing work. It includes recycling metals from the former US Department of Energy facility as well as decommissioning and decontaminating nuclear materials.

Duty-free threat to jobs

jobs will be under threat if the ban goes ahead in July 1999. A further 350 would go from the gin and vodka production industries. The report gave a warning that removing the duty-free market for travellers between EU member states would cost the scotch industry sales worth £136 million — more than the value of the Japanese export market for scotch.

MACFARLANE, the Glasgow packaging group, lifted pre-tax profits only slightly in the six months to June 30, from £10.3 million to £10.4 million, on turnover of £94 million, up 24 per cent from £76 million. Earnings per share fell from 5.66p to 5.66p, and a dividend of 1.55p (1.47p) will be paid on October 7. The company blamed the cost of integrating Manton Plastics, the industrial film business it bought in April, and the strength of sterling for its disappointing performance.

GUINNESS PEAT, the investment group run by Sir Ron Brierley, the New Zealand-born entrepreneur, said yesterday its British portfolio was more likely to be a prominent area of activity in the future. Guinness Peat raised pre-tax profits from £1.1 million to £19.6 million in the six months to June 30, on sales up from £41.2 million to £52.9 million. Profits from the disposal of businesses, including its stake in New Zealand's Colonial Motor, were £4.6 million. Earnings per share were 1.37p (1.12p). Again, there is no half-year dividend.

SHARES in Hays, the logistics group, closed up 4p, at 618½p, yesterday as it confirmed yesterday's report in *The Times* that it had won a £100 million, five-year contract to deliver groceries to Shell's 850 petrol stations. Hays will handle almost £2 billion worth of food over the life of the agreement and will run the operation from five main depots, creating about 400 jobs in Northamptonshire. It will make six deliveries a week allowing a wider range of fresh food to be supplied. Hays agreed a similar deal with BP last month.


QUICKS, the motor distributor, lifted pre-tax profits 11 per cent to £3.1 million, in the half year to June 30 on sales down from £184.4 million to £175.9 million. Earnings per share rose from 7.8p to 8.9p. The interim dividend rises from 2.75p to 3.25p. Borrowings have been cut to £8.3 million, putting gearing at 26 per cent, down from 39 per cent in December. The shares rose 3p, to 126½p. Michael Moore, chairman, forecasts a satisfactory trading outcome for 1997 as Quicks broadened its activities and the new car market improved.

ERA, the ailing group that sells models, toys and cameras, suffered an overall loss of \$12.6 million in the year to February 28, a decline from the previous year's after-tax profit of \$303,000. Sales rose from \$77.3 million to \$91.7 million. Losses per share reached 10.27p, against earnings of 0.34p. The final dividend has been passed. Last year there was a final 0.1p payout. The group said that its current liabilities exceeded its current assets by £2.6 million and that it met day-to-day working capital requirements through bank overdrafts.

THE SLUMP in industrial land development during the early 1990s recession has led to

Derek Wilson, chief executive, said: "We are actually running out of space at the moment. We have a fair

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY



Bridgeman: welcome move

Trading has been banned. 264 agents, a tiny proportion of the estimated 30,000 in Britain.	Australia 5	Bank Days	Bank Days
The new code of practice comes into force on January 1; it will be run by the National Association of Estate Agents, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, ISVA (the Incorporated Society of Valuers and Auctioneers) and the Ombudsman for Corporate Estate Agents.	Austria 5	Belgium 1	Belgium 1
The extension of the code was welcomed by John Bridgeman, Director-General of the Office of Fair Trading. He said: "It will be helpful for consumers to know they will receive a uniform standard of service from agents who subscribe to the scheme."	Canada 1	Denmark 1	Denmark 1
	France 1	Germany 1	Germany 1
	Hong Kong 5	Italy 1	Italy 1
	Japan 1	Malta 1	Malta 1
	Spain 1	Sweden 1	Sweden 1
	Switzerland 1	Turkey 1	Turkey 1
	U.S.A. 1	U.S.A. 1	U.S.A. 1

STOCKS		
	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia S	2.20	2.18
Australia G	2.40	2.18
Belgium Pr	25.00	19.74
Canada S	2.39	2.18
Canada G	2.39	2.18
Denmark U	11.23	10.82
Finland Mnt	9.22	9.22
France G	10.22	9.48
Germany Un	10.22	9.48
Greece Dr	.483	.44
Hong Kong S	19.31	12.11
India S	2.40	2.40
Ireland Pr	1.15	1.07
Japan S	509.48	577.36
Japan Yk	2.38	2.38
Malta	0.989	0.91
Netherlands	3.68	3.68
New Zealand S	2.27	3.18
Norway S	12.61	11.61
Portugal G	306.35	284.50
S Africa Ind	8.31	23.45
Spain Pr	27.74	27.50
Sweden Pr	15.43	267.50
Switzerland Pr	8.25	8.25
Taiwan L	270.97	250.00
Taiwan L	270.97	250.00
UK S	1.75	1.57

Notes for small denomination securities: Bank orders only as supplied by Barclays Bank, London. Bank orders for large denomination securities apply to investment banks.

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LEGAL NOTICES

[illegible]

"The 1997-1998 season was the best we've ever had," says John H. Smith, executive vice president of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). "The 1997-1998 season was the best we've ever had," says John H. Smith, executive vice president of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB). "The 1997-1998 season was the best we've ever had," says John H. Smith, executive vice president of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB).

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When Chinese walls are broken



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Broadgate resounded to screams of agony yesterday as SBC's Warburg capricious the full wrath of the Securities and Futures Authority. After some fancy footwork that avoided its own compliance procedures, let alone the bank of the SFA, the bank is at last being punished.

Public floggings for the guilty men? Not quite. Instead, SBC must endure being "severely reprimanded" for its behaviour in each of two separate incidents and stump up £550,000. That may include what the SFA proclaims as the highest fine it has ever levied, but if a couple of traders clubbed together, they could probably settle it with their bonuses.

If this is the penalty for breaching Chinese walls and operating in a way that could have benefited the bank at the cost of its clients, then it is hardly likely to encourage other houses to operate to the highest standards.

The minutiae of SBC's entrepreneurial involvement in the shares of the regional electricity companies has taken the SFA much unravelling. The events in question took place in the second half of 1994, but it was not until August 1996 that the SFA instituted disciplinary proceedings. Clearly the gossip that had been reverberating around the Square Mile took its time to reach the SFA headquarters on the other side of the Thames.

Deliberations there have been slowed by the need to probe a sec-

ond incident of dubious behaviour by SBC, this time an attempt to profit at the expense of its client during the liquidation of Kipit. Kleinwort's investment trust. So blatant was this offence that SBC itself booted out the individuals concerned. But there have been no heads rolling as a result of the RBC incident, and it seems that the bank is still highly reluctant to admit to this being anything more than a minor slip up. Yet, when the arcane details of cash performance notes and hedging are put to one side, the crux of the accusation against SBC is simple and terribly serious: that it failed to keep its Chinese walls intact.

Remarkably, the SFA castigates SBC for allowing its compliance department to breach the wall between corporate finance and the market-makers, but then accepts the bank's assertion that it and its employees have always acted in good faith and were not guilty of wilfully or intentionally doing anything wrong.

Perhaps it is possible to breach a Chinese wall accidentally, but guffaws in the City yesterday indicated that most practitioners thought that, whether the chosen route was over the top, under it,

or through it, crossing a wall generally requires a positive effort.

Needless to say, when the information from the other side landed with them, the market-makers felt obliged to try and make use of it. They may now work for investment bankers, but the essential characteristics of the breed have not changed.

That is why the walls are so essential, and why a breach is so serious.

Another fine mess, Stanley

Excellent news from Boots. It has put an end to the problems with AG Stanley, the FADS and Homestyle business that has lost £33.3 million over the past four years by trying to sell paint and wallpaper on the high street. Just listen to Lord Blyth: "Much has been done to develop the AG Stanley

business. It now has much clearer branding, better merchandise and marketing and a greatly improved store portfolio. Prospects for the business are much brighter than they have been."

But hang on a minute — what's this? "AGS remains loss-making." Oh dear. In fact, so dismal are its prospects that Boots is giving away the business, along with nearly 300 leased stores, and is throwing in £7.55 million of cash and £1.4 million of freehold property for good measure. For this, Lord Blyth and the company he runs will receive the princely sum of £1 from the appropriately named Alchemy Partners.

Jon Moulton's new venture capital outfit that must now try to make gold from AG Stanley's base metal. Total Boots losses on the business, which has sales of about £110 million a year, will amount to £180 million.

Stanley is, of course, one of the gems Boots picked up when eight years ago it threw away £900 million to buy Ward White, which still ranks highly in the annals of great corporate blunders. FADS and the Homestyle soft furnishings business have been left behind as we have all grown used to doing our DIY shopping in out-of-town retail parks. Stanley has tried to follow, but Homestyle's 92 out-of-town stores still represent less than a third of the total portfolio.

The future looks bleak for many of Stanley's 2,400 employees — the same number as two years ago. Mr Moulton, installed as chairman, is likely to prove much more ruthless than Boots in closing loss-making shops.

Boots prides itself that it has extricated itself from 300 potentially awkward leases for a cash cost of less than £8 million. That is one way of looking at giving away £38 million of net assets — though one that is only possible when you have a profit machine like Boots the Chemists to pay the bills. The Boots involvement

with DIY has brought its shareholders little but pain. It seems you can't even give these businesses away — remember, Boots itself received £65 million from WH Smith to take on the Do It All problem. Boots is pleased with progress at the still loss-making Do It All. One must hope the venture comes to a happier end than AG Stanley.

Where are the venturers?

Where is the enterprising venture capitalist prepared to take on WH Smith? The business may have problems in finding a winning format for its main chain, but it does have some highly desirable satellites and the takers are already lining up to pay for them. All that is required is the brave intermediary to perform the dismemberment.

In spite of all the talk of break-up value at Sears — remember when analysts, whom we should allow to remain anonymous — talked of a value approaching 120p a share — the venture capitalists steered clear. A share price now sunk to 63p indicates that their reluctance to plunge into that

mire may have been well judged. But WH Smith is far less messy. With Virgin having already signalled its enthusiasm for buying out the WH Smith stake in its Virgin/Our Price music chain and now Tim Waterstone keen to retrieve his eponymous book business, a new owner of the business might quickly demonstrate that its parts are definitely worth more than the whole.

And there would be a wonderful symmetry in Mr Waterstone buying back Waterstone's. Having been sacked by Smith in 1981 after the group was unimpressed by his efforts in the US on its behalf, he built his own business so successfully that WH Smith felt obliged to buy it from him. Perhaps because the WH Smith people have left Waterstone's to its own devices, it has continued to flourish. But Mr Waterstone could be forgiven for fearing for his creation's future.

Two of a kind

IT IS no fun being a discount retailer when every other shop is emphasising low prices and lots of value, as Brown & Jackson and the wonderfully untidy named What Everyone Wants are well aware. There are few obvious benefits from putting the two together but at least they should be able to bring each other mutual sympathy. Understanding, of the marketplace at least, may prove harder for them to find.

Aerospace boom sets Rolls on record path

By Oliver August

ROLLS-ROYCE, the engine maker, is working at full throttle, according to interim figures yesterday. The group reported record profits, its highest ever order book value and a record cash pile.

The boom in civil aerospace over the past year is the main factor behind the growth. Civil business increased by 50 per cent over the six months to June 30, and 1,000 new jobs were created.

Pre-tax profits increased from £94 million to £116 million, lifting earnings per share to 6.5p from 4.64p. Net cash rose from £250 million to £293 million and the order book grew from £7 billion to £7.8 billion. The interim dividend was raised by 10 per cent to 2.2p.

Sir Ralph Robbins, chairman, said that he expected this boom to continue for longer than the 1980s, upturn that ended with the most severe aerospace recession in living memory.

He said: "The civil aerospace order spree will last longer than last time. Exactly how long is hard to say but it is much more stable. And we don't see people doing silly things with fares in the United States. The whole market is more stable."

But Sir Ralph gave warning to the market that bottlenecks caused by the order spree were incurring unspecified extra costs. Overtime working had increased by up to 40 per cent and extra capital investments had become necessary.

Sir Ralph went on: "We have got very specific bottlenecks, one of them is at the large compressor drum plant in Derby. We have needed new machine tools, new small factories and new manufacturing methods."

The military aerospace business was also described as stable. Rolls-Royce received a boost from the German Government's approval of its Eurofighter order. The German parliament still has to agree to the fighter aircraft project this autumn.

Sir Ralph said that the military division had benefited from efforts to downsize and increase efficiency. Rolls-Royce is currently gearing up to compete for the contract for the world's biggest aerospace project, the American-led \$170 billion joint strike fighter. The group expects to be awarded between 20 and 40 per cent of the engine work. Its Allison subsidiary in the United States, acquired in 1995, is co-operating with GE, one of Rolls-Royce's main rivals.

Meanwhile, the Government's return to Whitehall after the summer break is being eagerly awaited by Sir Ralph and his board. Next month, Rolls-Royce will lobby Labour politicians for an increase — from 29.5 per cent to 49.5 per cent — in the threshold for foreign ownership of its shares.

Tempos, page 26



Vernon Sankey, left, and Alan Dalby want predators kept away from Reckitt & Colman's American food business

Reckitt & Colman rules out sale

By Fraser Nelson

RECKITT & COLMAN, the mustard to fly-spray group, has ruled out any sale of its American food business.

The company, which last year said it considered its food operations non-core, played down speculation that it was looking for a buyer after the division returned profits of £10 million (£8.1 million) in the first six months of the year.

David Saltmarsh, company secretary,

said: "There would definitely be one or two major mustard companies in the US who would want to buy our food business. But it is not for sale."

Meanwhile, the company, whose chairman is Alan Dalby and chief executive Vernon Sankey, has signalled that it would pay up to £400 million to build up its home products side.

Strong growth from all its international markets helped the company to make £182 million (£165 million) before tax.

currency fluctuations and exceptional items at the halfway stage. However, the strength of sterling knocked overseas profits — which account for 92 per cent of the total — leaving the pre-tax figure at an expected £165 million (£179 million).

Earnings were 27.9p a share (25.7p) on a fully diluted basis. An interim payout of 8.7p (7.95p) will be made as a foreign income dividend on January 6.

Tempos, page 26

What Everyone Wants goes to B&J for £6.5m

By Chris Ayres

BROWN & JACKSON, owner of the struggling Pound-stretcher stores, yesterday moved to expand its portfolio of discount chains by launching an agreed £6.5 million cash offer for loss-making WEW, which trades as What Everyone Wants.

The bid is the latest twist in the rollercoaster history of WEW, formerly called Amber Day, which began with one shop in Glasgow in the early Seventies and grew into a national chain, owned and managed by an entrepreneurial couple, Gerald and Vera Weisfeld. They sold the business in 1990 for £50 million.

WEW was dogged by boardroom turmoil in the early Nineties and employed a succession of chairmen, notably Philip Green, the flamboyant retailer who was eventually ousted from the board in 1993. Since then, WEW's share price has collapsed from 64p to 4p.

The company, which is expected to lose more than £6 million this year, put itself up for sale last month after publishing the latest of three profits warnings.

B&J made a 4p-a-share cash offer for WEW, which

values it at £6.5 million. WEW has net assets of £24 million and 78 outlets, which will push the total of stores owned by B&J to 440.

Johan Visser, chief executive of B&J, said: "This purchase will enlarge the size of our group, and it fits our market niche. We see scope to improve the business. This was an opportunity that came to us. I let such an opportunity pass, then you won't have it again."

The offer follows B&J's purchase last week of Your Money Store for £7.6 million from Pepkor, the South African retail group. Pepkor is also the principal shareholder in B&J. James Millar, WEW chairman, said: "Having considered approaches from a number of interested parties, the board unanimously reached the view that the offer from B&J, which should secure the future of the group, represents the best outcome for creditors, banks, employees and shareholders."

B&J, which last year made a pre-tax loss of £2.7 million and saw like-for-like sales growth of only 1 per cent, said it would fund the acquisition from borrowing and existing balances.

BT shrugs off US lawsuits

By Eric Reguly

BRITISH TELECOM and MCI yesterday dismissed attempts by US shareholders to block their £11 billion merger as frivolous and said they would not hinder the deal.

A dozen lawsuits opposing the original merger agreement struck last November have been filed in Delaware courts. A new action against the revised merger agreement, which saw the price paid by BT drop more than 15 per cent, has just been filed by an MCI shareholder named Benjamin Brown. Neither MCI nor BT had heard of the small shareholder.

Michael Price, of Lazard Freres, MCI's financial adviser in Manhattan, said: "Legal actions are part of life here. They are never going to get in

the way of the deal. Most of them are filed by traders looking for a settlement."

The shareholders who filed the legal actions argue they are not receiving a fair price. None of the lawsuits seeks a preliminary injunction, meaning the plaintiffs are not attempting to block the deal at this stage. Instead, they hope to receive post-merger damages.

MCI and BT are convinced that the big institutional shareholders will approve the deal. BT's success in reducing the price seems to have placated most British shareholders.

The revised offer goes to BT and MCI shareholders for approval in November. The merger can proceed with 50 per cent approval.

Lender tests the water in Warsaw

By Gavin Lumsden

PROVIDENT FINANCIAL, the home credit company based in Bradford, is poised to expand into Eastern Europe in search of new markets for its door-to-door lending service. It has set up a pilot scheme in Warsaw and is considering launching another in the Czech Republic.

Howard Bell, chief executive, said that the region's large urban working class populations were an ideal market for Provident Financial. The company specialises in offering small unsecured loans to people on low incomes and with 10,268 agents operating in every UK postcode area. Along with its competitors, it has come under fire for the relatively high level of repayment it demands. A borrower of £100 will repay £159 over a year, giving an annual percentage rate of 104 per cent.

In its first half, the company increased pre-tax profits by 15 per cent to £54.7 million. Earnings per share rose by 18 per cent, to 13.8p. The interim dividend rises 1.25p to 7.75p. The number of borrowers grew by 9 per cent, to 1.3 million, indicating continuing demand for the company's flexible service, Mr Bell said.

The company is testing low-cost ten-year life insurance with Prudential to try to fill a gap left by companies such as Prudential that have abandoned their costly industrial branch businesses.

Bad debt rose to £23.7 million, in line with last year's 14 per cent growth in credit issued.

in order to succeed. Leigh currently has borrowings of about £54.1 million, against assets of £8.90 million. Leigh formerly vied with Shanks & McEwan for the title of Britain's largest waste disposal company, but its position started to slip when water and sewage companies began advancing on its market four years ago.

Its shares had underperformed the sector by about 75 per cent before General Utilities tabled its takeover bid. Leigh returned to profit last year, making £7.12 million before tax, on sales of £115 million.

French seal Leigh deal with dawn raid

By Fraser Nelson



Shaun Bowden, left, of Leigh Interests, with Edouardo Dupont-Matignon and Joseph Mangion, of General Utilities

COMPAGNIE Générale des Eaux, the French conglomerate, has extended its portfolio of British utilities by agreeing a £116 million takeover bid for Leigh Interests, the waste disposal company.

The French company's subsidiary, General Utilities, which already has stakes in seven UK water companies, is merging Leigh with Onyx, its disposal vehicles business, and Witech and Tranco, its two liquid industrial waste treatment companies.

It is making a cash offer of 175p a share — a 47 per cent premium to Leigh's share price before talks were an-

nounced and a level not seen by Leigh shareholders for three years.

General Utilities coupled the agreement with a dawn raid on Leigh's shares, buying 29.9 per cent of them minutes after the announcement was made. The move is understood to have been intended to warn off other potential bidders because Leigh's management — who own less than 1 per cent of the stock between them — reserved the right to accept any higher offers.

Shaun Bowden, Leigh's chief executive, said waste management companies would need substantial financial resources



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Shares down £12bn after Far East worries spread

CONCERNS over exposure to troubled Far Eastern markets, in the light of currency volatility and a sizeable overnight drop in Hong Kong's Hang Seng index, set the tone in London for a jittery market.

Sharp falls, registered by a number of heavyweight stocks, combined to pull the market lower. Standard Chartered was 10 1/2p lower at 87 1/2p, a fall of nearly 11 per cent, making it the worst performer among FTSE 100 shares, while HSBC dropped back 15 1/2p to £19.60 1/2.

Other groups affected by the Asian markets included Cable & Wireless, down 18 1/2p to 54 1/2p and also hit by a profits warning from an Australian subsidiary, Inchcape was 13 1/2p lower at 271 1/2p.

After nothing up modest gains in early trading, the FTSE 100 slid back to tread water ahead of Wall Street's opening. Renewed concerns over a rise in interest rates, after higher than forecast domestic product data, also rattled US investors, sending Dow Jones lower, with London following suit.

By the close the FTSE 100 was off 61.5 points, at 4,845.4, above its worst levels of the day, but with more than £12 billion wiped off share values. Volumes moved up, with just under 900 million shares traded before the market closed.

Shares in Rolls-Royce fell back 19p to 235 1/2p as the group's return to profits at the half-year stage was given a mixed reception. British Aerospace benefited from a broker recommendation and ended 9 1/2p higher at £14.58.

BT, which saw volumes of 84 million shares, ended 2 1/2p easier at 402p, while among other telecom stocks Vodafone was lifted 7p higher in earlier trading after higher than expected presentation to analysts on prospects for the fourth quarter. The shares failed to hold on to gains and ended 4 1/2p lower at 309 1/2p, with Orange up 2p at 308p.

Ladbroke edged up 1p to 261 1/2p after announcing a 39 per cent rise in first-half profits to £101.2 million, ahead of some City forecasts. There were no details of acquisition plans, other than hopes of a Hilton Hotel merger.

Better than forecast interim figures from T&N, the automotive parts group, and talk of a target price of 200p, helped its shares to climb 16p



Rising European Cup hopes gained Magpies 3 1/2p

to 103 1/2p. The near 11 per cent rise made it the best performer among second-line stocks.

Barclays continued its run, rising a further 0.2p to £14.20p, while the Woolwich added 3p to 296 1/2p. Schroders, reporting next week, was 17 1/2p higher at £18.82 1/2.

Takeover talk was again said to be fuelling the rise seen in Commercial Union shares.

The insurer put on 11p to 745 1/2p, the best of the FTSE 100 rises. There was also renewed talk of Halifax stalking the Prudential. Halifax rose a penny to 715p and the Prudential 5p to 609p.

Norwich Union eased back from its peak to end at 339 1/2p, down 6p, while St James's Place Capital dipped 3 1/2p to 140 1/2p. It was disclosed that Royal & Sun Alliance has

topped up its stake in the company to 4 per cent.

Profit-taking took the gloss off Reckitt & Colman after the Lemps to Lysol group reported interim headline profits in line with forecasts. The shares ended 20 1/2p lower at 96 1/2p.

Scotiabank & Newcastle put on 7 1/2p after an encouraging report on current year trading. The group also noted the impact of sterling on performance and its shares ended just a penny firmer at 724 1/2p.

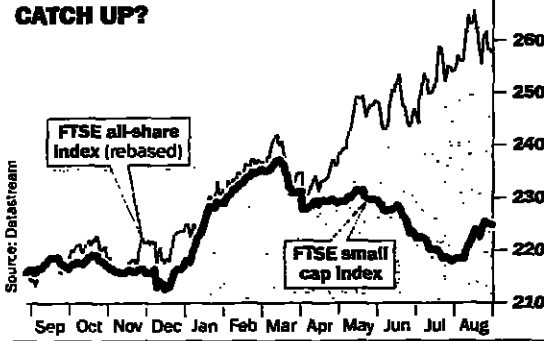
Thistle Hotels booked in a rise of 10 1/2p to 153p on more positive broker talk, with Macdonald Hotels also up 10 1/2p to 185p on consideration of its recent £3m acquisition.

Body Shop put on a burst of speed to notch up a 15p rise to 168p. There was talk of renewed interest on the basis that the shares have seen the worst. WH Smith was unchanged at 376 1/2p, having edged 4p higher at one point, while Boots ended 14p lower at 83 1/2p after news of its loss-making sale of AGC Stanley.

Qualification for the next round of the European Cup prompted a 3 1/2p rise to 130p for Newcastle United. Progress in the competition also spells a run of lucrative matches and there was talk of upgrades to year-end results. Less inspired was Aston Villa, which lost 7 1/2p to 850p, after losing to Tottenham Hotspur, unchanged at 96p.

Burmah Castrol fell back 43p to £10.59 1/2, ahead of results next week, while BP ended 4 1/2p firmer at 880p.

SMALLER COMPANIES SET TO CATCH UP?



WHILE FTSE 100 stocks yesterday followed a nervous path, nursing losses of nearly 72 points at one stage, relative calm prevailed among the smaller stocks.

Following the pattern seen in recent weeks, the FTSE 250 and FTSE small cap indices found more support, with the latter off just 5 points at 2,247.8, by the close.

Smaller companies have had a thin time of it since the spring, with both FTSE 250 and small cap indices left behind, sharply underperforming the wider

all-share index. Smaller company followers at Teather & Greenwood, the broker, are taking a more positive view of prospects in a newly published sector review.

Recent demand for smaller companies, it says, is underpinned by macro economic factors and there has been a change of sentiment towards smaller stocks. The broker expects the gap between the small cap and all-share index to narrow with the "catching up" likely to become more pronounced over the next six months.

COMMODITIES

LIFTS			
Commodity	Price	Change	Volume
COCA	1001-1005	+0.05	1200-1200
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GNI LOR (London 6.00pm)			
Commodity	Price	Change	Volume
CRUDE OIL (Brent FOB)	18.25	+0.20	1200-1200
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Burmah Castrol fell back 43p to £10.59 1/2, ahead of results next week, while BP ended 4 1/2p firmer at 880p.

AIM-quoted Country Garden rose 5 1/2p to 211 1/2p after reporting improved first half figures.

Boosey & Hawkes, awaiting further bid developments moved up with a 45p jump to 995p.

GILT-EDGED: The market drifted higher, with little economic news to affect sentiment. The September series of the long gilt closed up 7 1/2p at £141 1/2 on thin volumes, with 54,000 contracts completed.

Treasury 8 per cent 2000 moved up a tick to £102 1/2, while Treasury 8 per cent 2015 rose 1/2p to £105 1/2.

NEW YORK: Wall Street shares were reeling at midday, hit hard after a profit warning from Alterra Corp, the semiconductor company, ignited widespread nervousness about the corporate earnings outlook. The Dow Jones industrial average was down 98.01 at 7,689.32.

Long Gilt: Previous open interest 18076

German Govt Bond (Bund): Previous open interest 28525

Italian Govt Bond (BTP): Previous open interest 13662

Japanese Govt Bond (JGB): Previous open interest 13662

Three Mth Sterling: Previous open interest 102000

Three Mth Eurodollar: Previous open interest 102000

Three Mth Eurodollar: Previous open interest 102000

Three Mth Eurodollar: Previous open interest 102000

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7689.32 (-98.01)
S&P Composite 932.08 (-10.72)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 18451.45 (+40.51)
Hang Seng 16876.10 (-657.85)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 16876.10 (-657.85)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 877.27 (-30.68)

Sydney:
ASX 2631.30 (+4.80)

Frankfurt:
DAX 3973.65 (-22.01)

Singapore:
Straits 1846.62 (+9.34)

Brussels:
General 13216.14 (-107.45)

Paris:
CAC-40 2628.41 (-43.29)

Zurich:
SIX 1138.4 (-32.20)

London:
FTSE 100 4845.4 (-61.5)
FTSE 250 4631.4 (-28.2)
FTSE 1000 2943.1 (-26.7)
FTSE 1000 2943.1 (-26.7)
FTSE 1000 2943.1 (-26.7)

FTSE All-Share 2288.59 (-24.73)
FTSE Non Financials 2206.93 (-15.00)
FTSE Financials 125.76 (-0.15)
FTSE Govt Secs 94.65 (-0.15)
Barracuda 41372
SEAG Volume 1849140000
US Dollar 1.5494 (+0.0008)
German Mark 2.9003 (+0.0048)
Exchange Index 101.5 (-0.04)
Bank of England Official Close (4pm)
CETU 1.4758
LSDR 1.1635
RPI 157.5 Jul (3.3%) Jan 1997-100
RPIX 156.4 Jul (3.0%) Jan 1997-100

RECENT ISSUES:
Antofagasta Cr Uts 402p +1
Blakes Clothing 79p +1
Bristol & West Prf 108p +1
Camell Laird 136 +1
EMI 115 +1
Fairfield Ents 117p +1
Glen Holdings 55 +1
Glen Holdings 55 +1
Hendon Pubing 235p +1
Ionica Group 331 +1
Kingfisher Leisure 175p +1
LEPCO 78p +1
Landround 92p +1
Metroline 20 1/2p +1
Reaume Merin 108 +1
SBS Group 112p +1
Seven Trent B 33p +1
Stentor Warrants 85 +1
Style Holdings 85 +1
Thorn 20p +1
Viglen Technology 63p +1

RIGHTS ISSUES:
Dixon Mtrs n/p (235) 29 +2
Golden Land n/p (21) 2 +2
Logica n/p (600) 162p +1
Pendragon n/p (265) 2p +1

MAJOR CHANGES:
RISERS:
Leigh 173p (+21p)
T&N 163p (+16p)
Body Shop 150p (+15p)
Country Garden 211 1/2p (+5 1/2p)
Thistle Hotels 153p (+10 1/2p)
Boosey & Hawkes 995p (+45p)
Cortaca 220p (+9p)
Moss Bros 231p (+9p)
Servisair 346p (+11p)
Church 420p (+12p)

FALLS:
Rolls-Royce 235 1/2p (-19p)
General Cable 117 1/2p (-8p)
API 590p (-39p)
Cables 271p (-17 1/2p)
Inchcape 271p (-17 1/2p)
Burd 238p (-11p)
Jarvis 239p (-10p)
JBS Sports 448p (-16p)

Closing Prices Page 29

TEMPUS

Pension fund robbery

THE full cost of the great pension fund robbery of 1997 is becoming clearer. It is not just the extra bill facing companies with big pension schemes, such as BT and ICI, but the threat that companies will scrap final salary pension schemes in favour of cheaper and less valuable money purchase schemes. This is bad news for employees who may well be asked to dip into their own pockets to help fund the £2 billion shortfall caused by the loss of the dividend tax credit.

It is also bad news for long-term investors who like growing dividends. Apologists for the Chancellor's Budget think blame should be laid at the door of actuaries who undervalue pension funds which are typically stuffed with equities. Current valuations methods use dividend growth forecasts, ignoring the massive capital gains of recent years.

But this could begin to change as companies fret about their pension liabilities and moves are afoot to change the basis of valuation to one that takes a snapshot of a pension fund based on the current values of shares and the value of future liabilities using current discount rates.

This is a distraction and ignores the fact that a maturing pension needs income to pay a pension to its members. However, corporate treasurers will be tempted to put pressure on actuaries to produce a valuation that minimises pension costs. In the short term, that may allow companies to escape topping up pensions and reduce the pressure to increase dividend payouts. Although there are no signs yet, logic dictates that the Chancellor's pension grab should bring a market shift to bonds and high-yielding equities.

T&N

T&N is taking on the appearance of a submarine. When trouble looms (asbestos claims, currency hits) the share price dives, only to bob back to the surface when you least expect it.

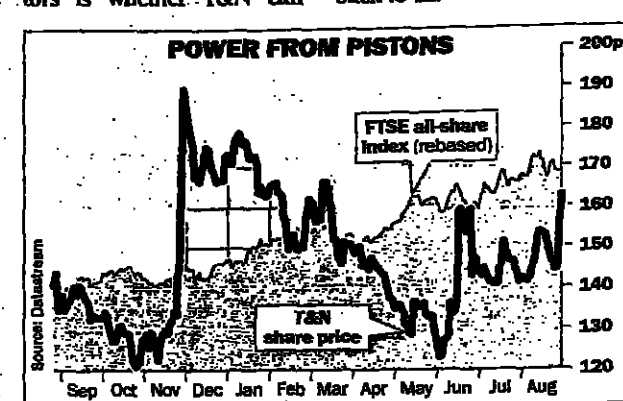
In March T&N announced yet another redundancy package aimed at restoring margins eroded by the strong pound and recession in the motor industry. And in June the US Supreme Court threw out the Geogre Settlement procedure, exposing T&N to more speculative asbestos injury claims.

Yet the fundamentals of T&N's business remain sound. And the company proved it yesterday with a one-point gain in operating margin, restoring the group average to double-digit figures, a rare distinction in the motor parts industry. More.

interesting was evidence of sales growth, up 4 per cent after excluding the £84 million translation effect of the strong pound. Volume accounted for three quarters of the improvement, but T&N also managed to raise prices 1 per cent in spite of poor market conditions.

The bottom line for investors is whether T&N can

generate a surplus after paying asbestos claims. Yesterday the figures showed a small net inflow for the half year. That alone justifies the price surge, but there is more on the horizon. A joint venture with Rheinmetall could leave T&N in control of the world's largest piston maker, enough to push the shares back to £2.



Rolls-Royce

THE very amiable and clubbable Sir Ralph Robbins had some jolly good interim results to report yesterday and he was in no mood to let talk of bottlenecks spoil the party. Laughing off suggestions that deliveries could be delayed by the recent order spree, he said that he was pleased to have such problems.

Investors may be less sanguine at the thought of production delays. For years, Rolls promised jam tomorrow, investors were told that earnings would jump when the recession was over. For the last year the aerospace sector has been booming, but Rolls has not been fully geared up to deal with the wave of new orders.

The jam has finally arrived, but now it cannot be squeezed into jars quickly enough. Rolls is blaming its suppliers, noting that some 70 per cent of its parts are on Rolls engine are bought in.

To improve the supply chain,

the Rolls management has been busy inventing new delivery methods, but the system is still suffering from the cull it went through during the recession when the number of suppliers dropped from 1,200 to 600.

Sir Ralph pointed out that even Boeing had been surprised by the sharpness of the upturn. Unfortunately for Sir Ralph, Boeing has been rather better at shipping out the jam. Rolls patient investors deserve better.

Reckitt & Colman

A DULL performance from Reckitt & Colman is quite an achievement for the consumer goods colossus that has suffered years of restructuring. After fine tuning its range of toiletries and fly sprays, it has now jockeyed into a position to reach a level of sustainable growth not seen since the recession.

In established markets and

developing a range of new products for emerging markets. Heavy advertising spend — amounting to some 20 per cent of sales — assures its lead in the Western world, while greater affluence in the Far East offers opportunities.

Poverty is the only barrier to buying a can of fly-killer and Reckitt believes that they will buy the market leader as soon as they can afford to.

The share price has finally broken through the 800p glass ceiling, but prospects of a bid from Unilever have all but disappeared — the shares should be held as a punt on consumer confidence in emerging markets.

The apparatus is in place, and the downside is limited to the now subsiding strength of sterling. The shares have come up some 20 per cent in the last six months, and on a prospective earnings ratio of 15 times they are still good value.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

LONDON FINANCIAL FLOW

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett
Long Gilt					
Previous open interest 180718	Sep 97	114.15	114.20	114.10	114.16
	Dec 97	114.07	114.09	113.97	114.01
German Govt Bond (Bund)					
Previous open interest 288252	Sep 97	102.14	102.43	102.00	102.30
	Dec 97	101.24	101.48	101.05	101.39
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)					
Previous open interest 13842	Sep 97	135.46	135.60	135.11	135.63
	Dec 97	137.75	137.85	137.30	137.91
Japanese Gov Bond (JGB)					
	Sep 97	127.58	127.60	127.52	127.60
	Dec 97	128.76	128.78	128.60	128.76
Three Mth Sterling					
Previous open interest 66208	Sep 97	92.88	92.93	92.67	92.71
	Dec 97	92.82	92.83	92.49	92.51
	Sep 97	92.86	92.87	92.66	92.70
Three Mth Euromark					
Previous open interest 167299	Sep 97	96.63	96.66	96.43	96.46
	Dec 97	96.43	96.47	96.42	96.47
Three Mth Eurodollar					
Previous open interest 92152	Sep 97	93.24	93.25	93.13	93.22
	Dec 97	93.51	93.53	93.49	93.52
Three Mth Euroyen					
	Sep 97	96.20	96.21	96.12	96.12
	Dec 97	96.12	96.13	96.02	96.02
Three Mth Euroswiss					
Previous open interest 168891	Sep 97	98.17	98.54	98.43	98.51
	Dec 97	98.18	98.27	98.17	98.26
Three Mth ECU					
Previous open interest 30036	Sep 97	95.60	95.68	95.60	95.62
	Dec 97	95.47	95.50	95.42	95.47
FTSE 100					
Previous open interest 78994	Sep 97	4954.0	4955.0	4938.0	4954.0
	Dec 97	4975.3	4975.5	4920.0	4916.3

ECONOMIC VIEW



ANATOLE KALETSKY

Asian turmoil spells danger for West

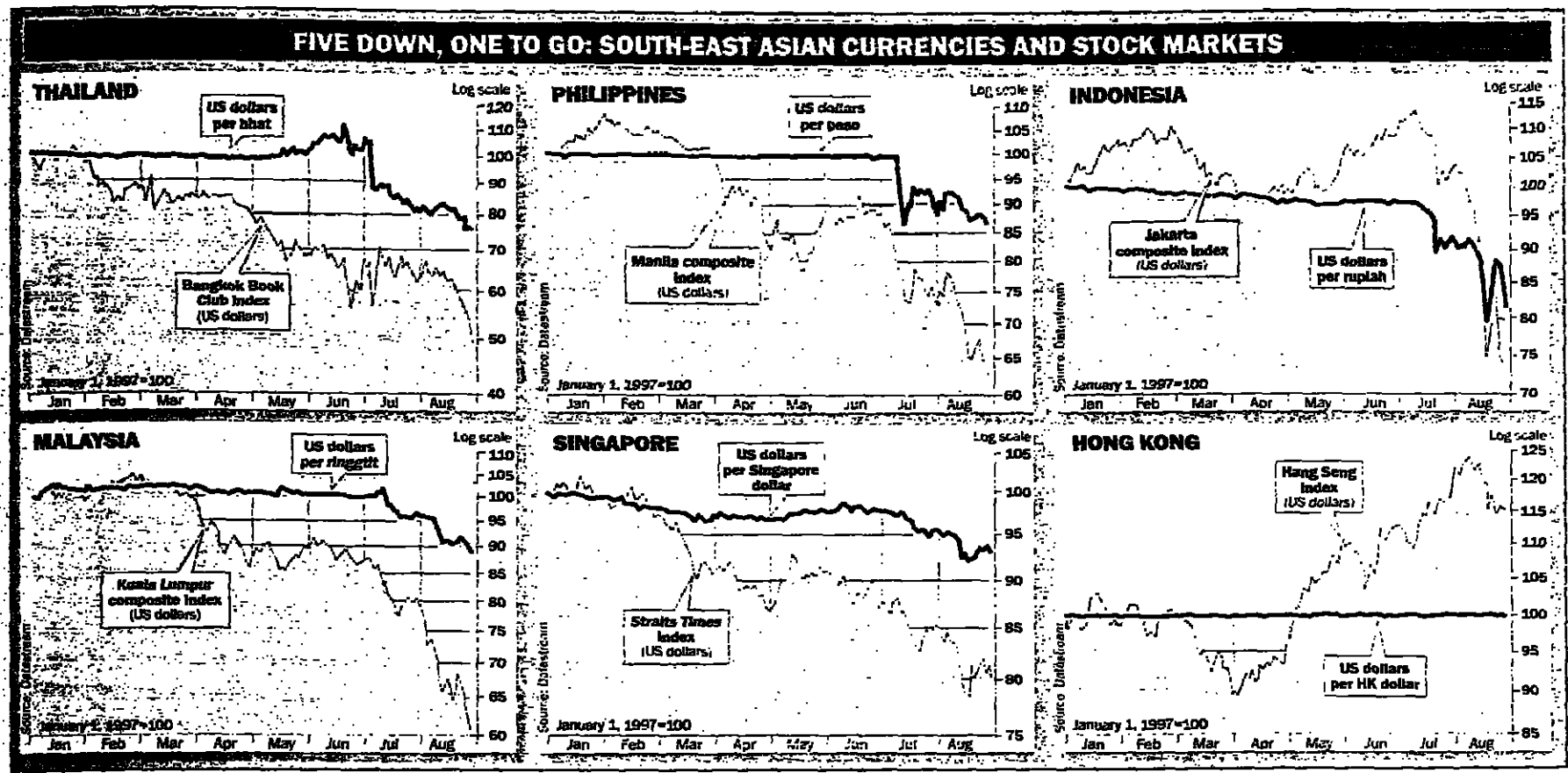
How Hong Kong reacts to the crisis could have global repercussions.

If you are wondering why financial markets have been getting so shaky this summer, take a look at the charts. Many possible triggers have been suggested by bearish commentators for the collapse of global share prices and perhaps the end of the benign non-inflationary economic expansion they have been wrongly predicting for years.

Until this week, however, I had never heard one that seemed convincing. Now I have. The epidemic of devaluations and financial crises sweeping across South-East Asia seemed a localised phenomenon when it began in the spring with a loss of confidence in the Thai baht. But as the currencies and financial markets of the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and now even wealthy Singapore have fallen like dominoes, it has become impossible to ignore what is going on.

The international importance of the crisis in South-East Asia stems partly from the fact that these are large and dynamic economies, accounting for a high and rapidly growing proportion of the world's investment and trade. It is conceivable that the present financial turmoil will presage a prolonged decline in Asia's economic growth rate, just as the bursting of the Tokyo stock market bubble in 1990 marked the end of the era of economic miracles in Japan. The crisis could even inspire second thoughts about the superiority of the Asian model of economic development, based on the inevitable triumph of China's robust Confucian values over the effete Judeo-Christian liberalism of the West. If so, I for one would be delighted.

The West's admiration of Asian values, especially as represented by the unstoppable might of China, has long filled me with alarm. I have devoted several of these columns since 1993 to arguing against the exaltation of Asia's



economic success by politicians such as Chris Patten and Tony Blair, and warning against the mania, especially among the British pension funds, for equity investment in Asian emerging markets.

But nice as it would be to think that the collapse of the Malaysian ringgit or the collapse of the Jakarta stock market will shake the West out of its cringing inferiority complex towards Asia and China, it is much too early to jump to any such conclusions. The chances are that the financial crisis will blow over and Asia will continue to do extremely well. With the notable exceptions of Singapore and Hong Kong, most Asian countries are still far behind Western standards of productivity and wealth. By importing Western technology and imitating Western production methods, they should continue to grow faster than Western Europe and North America until they begin to approach Western standards in several decades' time.

At present, however, the South-East Asian countries are still so poor that, despite large populations, their financial crises can have little more than a marginal direct impact on the world economy. Indonesia, for example, is the world's fourth-largest country in terms of population, but its gross domestic product and share of world trade are smaller than Belgium or Austria. Why, then, do I suggest that the turmoil in South-East Asia could shake the global financial system, trigger the overdue corrections in Wall Street and European stock markets, and perhaps even damage the remarkably benign prospects for worldwide non-inflationary growth?

The main channel of influence from South-East Asia can be summarised in two words: Hong Kong. The charts tell the story. Hong Kong may remain forever immune to the crisis of confidence engulfing its neighbours. But will investors continue to pour their

money into Hong Kong when the market there has risen 30 per cent since April, when it is 7 per cent from its all-time high, when flats there are selling at values that would have frightened investors in Tokyo in the late 1980s, and when two thirds of the stock market's value is attributable to development and bank shares, not only dependent on the local bubble but exposed to the failed property speculations in Bangkok, Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur?

Some investors will no doubt remain committed to Hong Kong and China — for example British pension fund managers who have proved such suckers for the "Asian values" story that they missed the entire bull market on Wall Street and now have more money invested in the £160 billion Hong Kong economy than in the \$7.6 trillion economy of the US. But traders on the Hong Kong stock market have been getting increasingly nervous. Perhaps, significantly, on many of

the scary days when stock markets around the world have retreated sharply, it has been overnight selling in Hong Kong that has driven London and then Wall Street lower, whereas the sequence is usually the other way round.

Unlike Thailand, Indonesia or Singapore, Hong Kong could have an impact out of all proportion to the tiny size of the local economy. A crisis in Hong Kong could trigger financial and geopolitical repercussions extending far beyond South-East Asia.

The geopolitical threat is clear. It is less than two months since Hong Kong was handed over to China. The Chinese authorities, driven by their legendary obsession with saving face, would go to any lengths to prove they were capable of running the economy as well as the British. But what would they do if the trickle of nervous capital outflows turned to a flood, as it did in the neighbouring countries?

The greatest danger for Hong

Kong lies in the possibility that a pullout by investors fearing a repeat of losses suffered in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, would provoke a local reaction that would aggravate the crisis. The most dangerous possibility would be some kind of heavy-handed political reaction, such as an attempt to impose foreign exchange controls or to limit the economic freedoms on which Hong Kong has thrived. Such action would almost certainly provoke international political condemnation as well as aggravating the loss of confidence.

The Chinese could then be tempted to present the crisis as a politically-motivated attempt by foreigners to interfere in "internal" Hong Kong affairs. The result could be an escalation of economic and political tensions involving the whole of China's relationship with America, Europe and Japan. There is no need to guess about the possible course of such a confrontation between the West and China to

see that it could have alarming and potentially disruptive effects.

It is also worth considering a second scenario, which would be less politically dramatic but financially still fraught with danger. In response to a loss of confidence the authorities' top priority would certainly be to defend the Hong Kong dollar, and perhaps rightly so. While the governments of other South-East Asian countries made much of their determination to defend their exchange rates, these commitments fell now abandoned for the time being at least never had remotely the same symbolic significance as the link between the Hong Kong and US dollars.

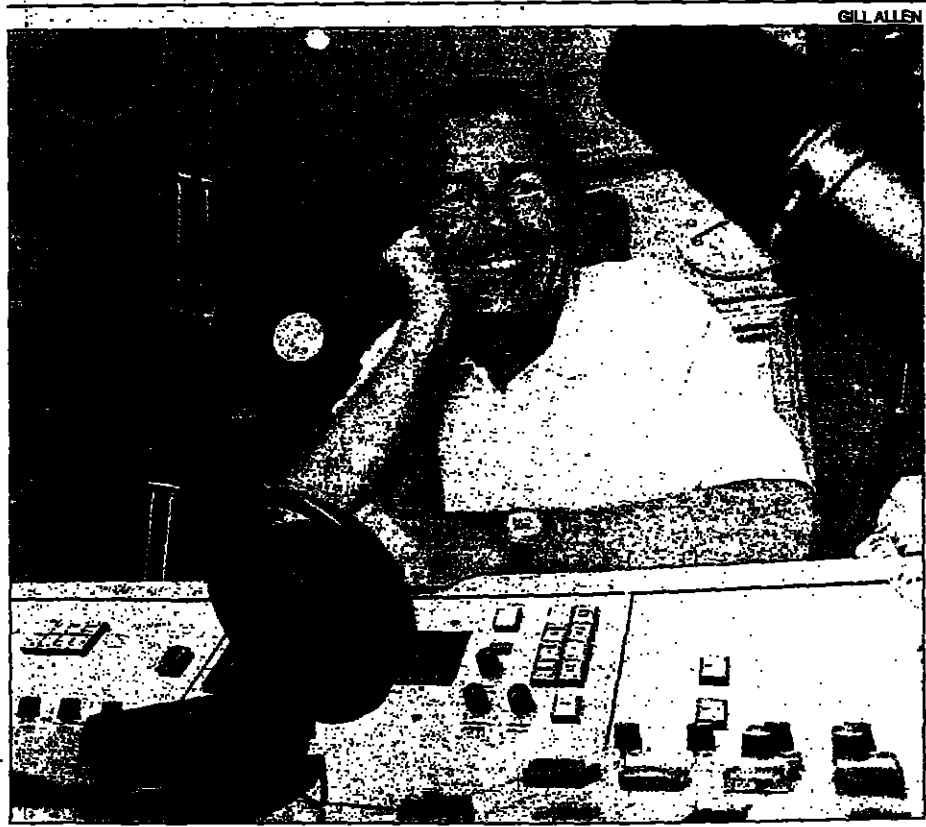
Among the people of Hong Kong, it has long been an article of faith that the introduction of an irrevocable link to the US dollar in 1983 was what stemmed the collapse of the markets and saved the island from catastrophe after Margaret Thatcher's decision to hand the colony back to China. The trouble is that defending the Hong Kong-US link to the bitter end, which the authorities would certainly try to do, could be painful and dangerous. It would mean driving interest rates higher in an economy whose leveraged property and stock market speculation has made it unusually vulnerable to tight money.

In the longer term, and at a deeper economic level, defence of the currency link would close off the escape route used by all of Hong Kong's neighbours to evade the financial crisis. The other countries have devalued their way out of trouble, driving down domestic costs, making their economies and financial markets more attractive to foreign investors and, simultaneously, relieving the very high interest rates that contributed to their crises in the first place.

If Hong Kong, by contrast, is determined to defend its currency its economic pressures could find other outlets: like Japan it could see falling wages, asset deflation and an even deeper collapse of the property and stock markets than its neighbours have suffered. Could there be a Japanese-style deflation in Hong Kong, spreading perhaps to China? What would this do to the world economy? The answers are anyone's guess, but the questions do seem troubling.

Sound idea for the millennium

Next week's launch of Xfm as an alternative radio station comes after an epic battle, says Chris Ayres



Chris Parry, founder of Xfm, defeated 124 consortiums to secure London's last FM licence

When Xfm goes on air at midday on Monday it will mark the end of an epic six-year battle for Chris Parry. The station's chief executive has ploughed more than £250,000 of his own money into the alternative music station, overseen five test broadcasts, and made three applications to the Radio Authority for a permanent London FM licence.

His first two applications ended in rejection, with licences instead going to Heart, Virgin and the ill-fated Viva. "The second time was so close, we should really have got it," says Parry. "But high politics and big money drama caused us to be passed over. That decision strengthened my determination to carry on. It also made me want to get even."

Parry fought back by putting together a formidable team of high-profile supporters, including U2, Oasis, Supergrass and 11 MPs, one of them Chris Smith, the Secre-

tary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Financial backing came from several sources, including Harvey Goldsmith, the impresario, and CLT, the owner of Atlantic 252 and Country FM.

In February Parry's political wrangling paid off when Xfm overcame competition from 24 consortiums — one of which was backed by Chris Evans and Michael Caine — to be awarded London's last FM radio licence. "It was a huge relief," says Parry. "People had been wanting a station like Xfm for a very long time."

Parry looks more like a middle-aged teacher than an ageing rocker. His hair is short, and he wears blue jeans, a crumpled white polo top and boating shoes with no socks. He has not lost his New Zealand accent,

even though he left that country 28 years ago.

After leaving school at 17, he played for two years in a rock band called The Fourmyulas, which had several Top Ten hits in New Zealand, before coming to London to study marketing and advertising. After college, he became an artist and repertoire manager for Polydor records, where he signed The Jam, but lost the Sex Pistols to EMI.

Parry left Polydor to form his own label, Fiction Records, after the company refused to put him in charge of its A&R department. He immediately signed The Cure and Polydor decided to strike a deal. "I walked into the building a £6,000-a-year A&R man and walked out with £100,000 and a label deal," he says. He put

Mayor's nest

WELL, did he or didn't he? Dark rumours over whether Sir Roger Cook, the Lord Mayor of London who tomorrow finishes his nightmarish 1022-mile bicycle ride from John O'Grates to Land's End on behalf of the Cancer Research Campaign, has actually cycled every mile of his journey. It makes little difference to the £250,000 the event will raise for the charity, because the ride was always a joint effort by a team of eight. But he and his team have been spotted in the back of the van accompanying the jaunt. The charity

was being a little guarded — "He is certainly doing his best," said a spokeswoman rather weakly.

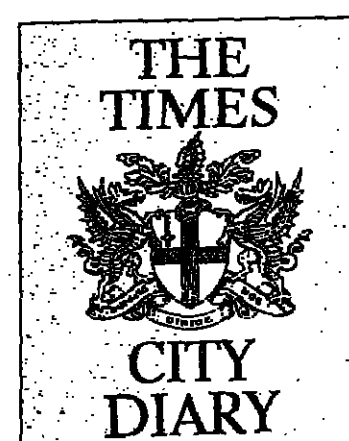
The evidence against, apart from those sightings, is the fact that the Lord Mayor has been known to tip the scales at 20 stone and took no exercise in preparation for the two-week event, which requires an average of 70 miles a day covered. His trip has not been universally popular at the City Corporation, which is wrestling with a new Government and possible constitutional change. But here is the truth, from a convincingly breathless Lord Mayor in Exeter last night.

He expects to miss the odd mile, perhaps 50 in all, because of necessary side trips. "As near as dammit I should do the thousand miles," he says. As to those reports, "if people have seen us in a minibus, it is because we are 25 miles ahead of ourselves. Because the hotels are pre-booked, at the end of the day we have to put the bikes in the van and be bussed back."



Sir Roger is nearing his journey's end

SO WHO was the analyst giving poor Jeremy Hardie, chairman of WH Smith, such a hard time at the result this week? "How did you allow your stock position to get so out of control?" she asked. Searching questions from one of the City's finest. And who should know better than Ju-



lie Ramshaw, retail watcher at Morgan Stanley? Who, as you will recall, joined after some years as merchandising director of Laura Ashley, another retailer which knows a bit about stock control. Only a bit, though. In fact, some would say even less than WH Smith. Those that can, do, those that can't...

Picture that

DILLONS, the bookseller owned by EMI, is "unhappy", as well it might be, about being linked with a service on the Internet providing pictures of naked women and teenage girls. The offending Web site has an address that is remarkably similar to the bookseller's own, including use of the company name. This is probably not coincidental — several companies

have found their names hijacked on the Internet in this way. But it could not have come at a worse time for Dillons, which plans its own bookshop over the Internet next month. The possibilities for confusion are intriguing.

Transfer move

A DODGY knee may have been Leicester City's loss, but it has proven to be Nomura's gain. The Japanese-owned bank has hired Mark Warburton from NationsBank as senior trader on its foreign exchange team in London, starting on Monday. Things could have been so different, though. Warburton, 34, was on the books at Leicester City before injury stopped that career. After a brief stop at non-league Enfield, he went into the City, poor lamb, and made his reputation on the dollar-denominated market. He was chief dealer at Merita Bank before joining NationsBank, working in London and Chicago. I am told he no longer plays football, though.

AS IF they did not have enough problems adjusting to the new world order, I learn that some of the former Iron Curtain states are about to be graced with the attentions of Provident Financial, our favourite door-to-door loan provider. The company is expanding into eastern Europe, including Poland and possibly the Czech Republic, says Howard Bell, the chief executive. But not Russia. "The Poles are inherently more hon-

est than the Russians," he says — thereby blowing any chance he may ever have had of starting in Moscow.

Don't bet on it

LADBROKE'S figures yesterday were the first for half a decade not to feature a raft of incomprehensible exceptional one-off debits and losses. Peter George, chief executive and the man who survived the reign of Cyril Stein to lead the group to stock market respectability, might have expected the City to have been grateful. Not so. "Totally unexceptional," sniffed one analyst.

MARTIN WALLER



"This year we're going for the minimalist uncluttered look"

DAEJAN HOLDINGS PLC

The Chairman, Mr B. S. E. Freshwater, reports:

- Portfolio valued at record £440 million.
- Increase in net rental income to £28 million.
- Gearing remains conservative.
- Continued policy of steady and sustained growth.

Year ended 31 March	1997	1996
Net Profit After Tax	£16.8m	£14.5m
Dividends Per Share	38.0p (proposed)	35.0p

Copies of the Report and Financial Statements are available from: The Secretary, 162 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8HR.

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259	18: Gypsum	82.40	46.00	- 0.57	1.27	Euro S&P 500	57.90	61.20	- 0.10	0.90
299	High Income Funds					-10: Asian	58.10	61.40	- 0.10	0.90
	18: Euro Ind. A	88.10	103.50	- 0.50	5.18	Euro Yield	576.00	562.20	- 1.00	0.82

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Company	12/31/99	12/31/98	% Chg.	12/31/97
Amgen	125.10	128.30	+ 0.8%	174
Amgen	87.79	90.69	+ 0.4%	..
Amgen	98.56	102.90	+ 0.2%	1.26
North American	63.67	67.69	+ 0.34	0
North American	78.26	79.73	+ 0.23	0
North American	70.38	73.50	+ 0.26	3
North American	70.38	73.50	+ 0.26	3

Equity	177.05	183.91	0.00	1.90
INVESTMENT SERVICES				
Equity	153.26	163.29	+4.20	3.70
Income	122.00	127.00	+1.00	0.80
Assets	172.00	182.00	+1.00	0.80
Liabilities	57.10	62.21	+0.50	0.50
Equity	114.90	124.79	+0.89	0.70
Income	136.20	139.20	+2.00	1.60
Assets	140.00	145.00	+5.00	4.00
Liabilities	100.00	105.00	+5.00	4.00
Equity	40.00	40.00	+0.00	0.00
Income	163.00	163.00	+0.00	0.00
Assets	163.00	163.00	+0.00	0.00
Liabilities	163.00	163.00	+0.00	0.00
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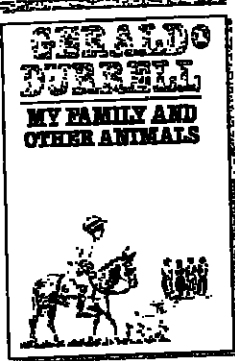
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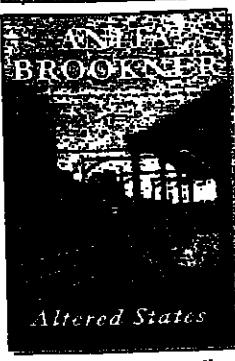
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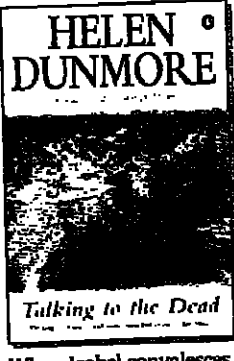
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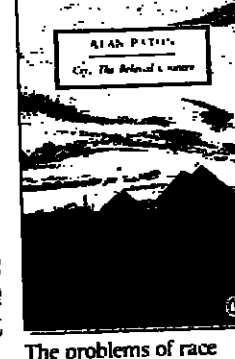
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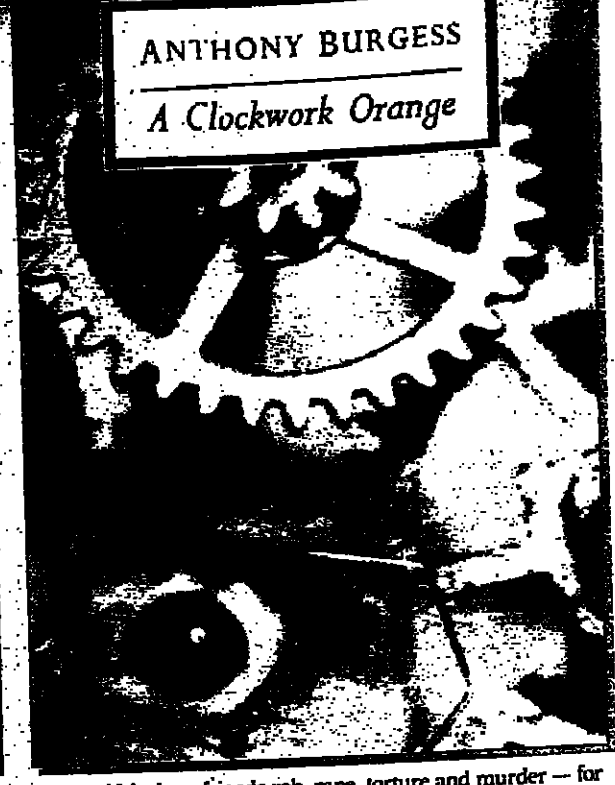
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EDUCATION

Tim Jones uncovers the secrets of attaining good grades and conquering the league tables

Assess, and their success is assured

Some of Britain's most successful schools are using sophisticated management techniques to ensure that their pupils achieve academic excellence. Increasingly, they are adopting "quality control" methods that stretch students to the limits of their ability.

Cynthia Hall, Headmistress of St Helen and St Katharine, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, a leading independent girls' school, says old-fashioned "sink or swim" methods are no longer acceptable in the classroom. Tables of A-level results published in *The Times* show that her school has risen from 41st position last year to sixth. The improved position was in part due to the change in the way *The Times* now compiles the results. Previously, schools were ranked on the average number of points achieved by each pupil. The new table uses the average points for each subject entry.

Mrs Hall, along with other heads, welcomes the new system, saying that most girls' schools generally enter pupils for only three A-levels, the maximum required by a university. This eliminates the advantage previously enjoyed by some leading boys' and mixed schools, where pupils are entered for four or more A-levels.

Mrs Hall says that part of the reason for the school's success has been the introduction in the past few years of a close monitoring system to assess the progress of every pupil. This is consolidated by half-term progress reports at which the achievement of every girl is dis-

cussed and assessed. Staff give pupils extra tutoring and help whenever they need it.

A similar system of continuous assessment is practised at Withington Girls' School in Manchester, which came top of the league table. Margaret Kenyon, the Headmistress, says that one of the advantages she has lies in having only 300 girls in the senior school. "The school," she explains, "is a very attractive size, which enables me to know all my pupils."

Mrs Kenyon says that from the moment a girl arrives, her progress is monitored in an unobtrusive way. "I talk to the staff at the end of every summer and we discuss every girl's results and performance," she adds. "The girls are also given a mini A-level paper in November to see whether they have made the jump from GCSE to A-level thinking."

At Withington, Mrs Kenyon says, girls are not motivated by the awarding of prizes and no ranking order is given in examinations. She says: "We have a level intake and the girls are all aiming to go to university, so motivation is not usually a problem we encounter. It is not very meaningful to say that a girl is best when you have a lot who are very good. Because of our selection, the difference in the ability range is not great."

Underperformance is also a problem seldom encountered at St Paul's Girls' School in London, which was second in the league table. Janet Gough, the High



Celebration: pupils at the table-topping Withington Girls' School rejoice in their grades

Mistress, says: "If that happens, it is because the girl has a crashingly active social life or because something wild has happened at home."

Miss Gough believes that apart from monitoring the skills and progress of each girl, an important part of the school's success is the open-door policy it pursues. "If you have talented pupils, good-calibre staff and committed parents," she says, "there is not very much that is going to go wrong."

Her sentiments are shared by James Sabben-Clare, the Headmaster of Winchester, whose

school, with fees almost three times Withington's, came third in the table. He says: "We have a lot of intelligent and well-motivated pupils and talented staff. If you put those two together, in a happy environment, you would expect to get good results."

Tony Tuckwell, Headmaster of King Edward VI School in Chelmsford, agrees that the new table is probably fairer, even though it means that his school slipped down from 19th to 133rd place. Despite this, he will not abandon entering able pupils for four or even more

A-levels. "We take the view that it broadens pupils' minds," he says. "If you go by the total points score, you are able to establish which schools are stretching their most talented pupils."

Mr Tuckwell, in common with other successful heads, believes that academic success is only part of the whole. An emphasis on arts, drama and community and charitable work is an essential element of their most important task. And that, all the heads agree, is to turn talented children into responsible citizens of the world.

A good head for exam figures

Hugh Thompson marvels at the comprehensives that manage to compete

There is a group of schools that is neither private nor selective yet which produces GCSE results that compare favourably with the best.

This is a small band of state comprehensives which, despite having about 30 per cent of pupils who are below average and another large group who are average, manage to achieve 90 per cent A* to C grades at GCSE. So how do schools that do not select pupils, have annual cutbacks and 30 in a class do it? They couldn't without excellent — often almost absurdly dominant — head teachers, many of whom serve for decades.

Admittedly, many of the best comprehensives — such as Watford Grammar, Cardiff High and Dame Alice Owen — were previously good selective schools. Nevertheless, they have a very important story to tell.

Aldon Williamson, the Headmistress of Dame Alice Owen, a mixed school in Potters Bar, North London, says: "Having well-qualified, experienced staff and a low staff turnover, plus everyone totally committed to doing their best, both in the classroom and elsewhere, is the key. This school has been able to draw on its 350 years of history, which gives us an added dimension. We have always been carefully managed, have thought about the priorities and looked to the future."

Many schools caught in the bind between budget cutbacks, teachers seeking early retirement and the greater expense of experienced professionals have gambled on cheaper, less experienced teachers.

All the top comprehensives would consider that to be a penny-wise, GCSE-foolish strategy. Griff Roberts, Head Teacher at Cardiff High, says: "Of course, better teachers are more expensive, but they are the most important resource. The local authority

chooses our children, and our control is over the staff. We have very effective mentoring schemes which brings home to both children and parents that they could do better. This is achieved by setting out individual programmes to strengthen weak areas."

Schools that achieve good results not only lose fewer teachers but have the best applying. Teachers naturally give more when results are so demonstrable. These schools also receive the best moral and financial support from parents.

Enid Fitzgibbon-Butler, Head Teacher of Silverdale School, Shropshire, which attained 77 per cent A* to C GCSE grades last year, most with grade A, says: "We have restricted our curriculum to traditional subjects, we have kept it straightforward. No one comes here if they want a great diversity. We have kept our expertise very focused. We do not do vocational qualifications, for instance. At the children, including those below average, know that we are a school about being successful. We have developed a culture of success. No one is bullied in this school for doing well. Having a sixth form is a great help — it gives the younger children something to aim for. Our average class size is 30 — below 16 years and 21 above. Obviously, children would do better in smaller classes but our results speak for themselves."

What these few schools show is that with the right head teacher and staff, the comprehensive idea can work. Joan Olivier, Head Teacher of the all-girl Lady Margaret's in Fulham, southwest London, which achieved 90 per cent A* to C GCSE last year, says: "The secret instilling the ethos of work. The girls know that this is a place of study. We push them as far as they can go. We always hit the problem early and if the parents support us we get the results."

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Iola Smith reports on the help offered to students by Bath University's financial advice service

Live within your means

The drop-out rate at British universities is the envy of most of the world, but it has been rising in recent years. Student debt is one of the main causes, and is expected to become yet more of a problem when grants disappear.

While others wring their hands over the grim prospects for their students, Bath University has acted to pre-empt financial difficulties wherever possible. The campus now runs a comprehensive financial advice service.

The university says that studying for a degree can cost as much as £20,000. But, unlike the detailed financial assessments and cost analyses that people taking out a mortgage prepare before making their decisions, students are often unprepared for such a large commitment.

The result is that many graduates leave university in debt. According to Bath, the average owed after a four-year course is £6,000. That sum would be much higher if students did not have part-time paid work. Judith Walker, Bath University's money adviser and debt counsellor, says: "Poor money management skills are not to blame for rising debt. Insufficient funds are being made available to students — particularly to mature students with dependants. Thirteen per cent of Bath's students fall into this category."

To live on campus, this year's first years will need about £3,500. If they plan to rent a flat in the Roman city, they will have to spend more — between £4,500 and £5,000. Yet, Mrs Walker says: "The maximum grant available to students coming to Bath is £1,755. They can take out a £1,685 student loan, making a total of £3,440."

To come through a four-year course financially unscathed, students will need to plan their finances carefully and get budgeting advice before problems occur. To get that advice they will be able to turn to the Money Advice Centre. This one-stop-shop covers all aspects of student finances, from administering student loans to Job Link, a free employment service that finds part-time work on campus or in the city. Since its creation last year, Job Link has provided employment for more than 300 students.

But the centre's main task is helping individual students to cope financially and assisting those who fall into debt. Debt counselling and even negotiation with creditors is offered to students who fall on hard times.

Mrs Walker says: "We will write to credit card companies on behalf of students, explaining how much they can afford to repay. Many credit companies will accept regular pay-



ments of as little as £5 a month, provided they can keep in close touch with the student debtor."

Students are also helped to garner support from the Access Fund, a grant allocated to universities by the Government to aid students in difficulties, and from Bath's own Hardship Fund. In both cases, special consideration is given to mature students in need and to students with dependants.

The priority, however, is to assist students before they get into debt. Individual students are therefore encouraged to use the centre to prepare a realistic budget each term. Mrs Walker says: "One of the hardest things about being a student is making the money last. Budgeting is vital and cannot be done too early. Students should stay in control of their financial situation by constant monitoring." She also recommends that they gain as much information as possible from every available source.

The Bath centre, for example, has work stations that provide access to in-

formation on state benefits and all the charity and trust support available to students. There are information technology facilities that enable students to plan and print out their own personal budget.

But there are also simple steps that students throughout the UK can take to make university less of a financial nightmare. They should take advantage of all available student discounts and, even more importantly, they should avoid credit and store cards.

Bath advises all students to talk regularly to their bank's student banking officer. They are urged to save whenever possible and to check all bank statements carefully. Yet excessively stringent budgets which cannot be adhered to should be avoided.

Part of Mrs Walker's remit is to meet sixth-formers and their parents to make them aware of the pitfalls before entering higher education. Sometimes, prospective students are in no financial

position to consider higher education. These include, for instance, potential students who have not been resident in the UK for the past three years — perhaps because their parents have been working abroad. Such people cannot have their fees paid by the local authority and they may have difficulty finding alternative funding.

The Money Advice Centre does its best to help — and can occasionally obtain the necessary lifeline — but students in this position are advised to assess their financial situation very carefully.

In the past, universities did not have to get involved in averting students' financial problems. Now, however, institutions realise that if they do not help, they can be penalised — because tuition fees are withdrawn by local authorities if students abandon their studies because of debt.

In future, more higher education institutions will probably follow Bath's example and do their utmost to keep their students solvent.

Don't give up yet — marks can still rise

If your A level or GCSE examination results were not as good as you had expected, do not despair or immediately switch career direction. Instead, consider a challenge to the examination board.

In many cases — sometimes up to 50 per cent of appeals — boards admit their errors and award a higher grade. Yet little publicity is given to the appeals procedure and few are encouraged by their schools or colleges, which have to process applications. Only private candidates can appeal directly.

However, take action now because every day that passes is vital for reassessing and remarking. The Scottish Qualifications Authority, for example, sets Sunday as the deadline for urgent appeals, and September 3 for all other appeals.

The starting point is to ascertain the expected grade from the course tutor. It may be that the results from a whole class are down by a grade or two and that staff have already made the decision to appeal.

Whether the claim is for an individual or a group, the process has several stages, starting with a clerical check. This is to establish that all parts of the script have been marked, correctly totalled and entered in the computer system, as well as to check that any examiner or moderation adjustments have been applied. A review of the total component marks, how the grade thresholds have been set, and whether any special allowances considered are also examined.

Fees vary. The Southern Examinations Group (SEG) charges £3 for GCSE while the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board (NEAB) charges £7.75, and £8.75 for A and AS levels. The second stage is to remark and to make the clerical check above. The SEG charges £22.50 for GCSE and £36 for A level per subject.

If your grades are unexpectedly low, you can have your papers remarked

A better approach is to ask for a report on the individual's performance in addition to both the remark and clerical check. This helps to identify strengths and weaknesses. If the grade is borderline, it should help to establish whether it is worth attempting a retake, and where to concentrate the effort. The

Little publicity is given to the appeals procedure

charges for this service vary greatly: £15 for GCSE, and £26 for A level at London, £31 and £72 respectively at NEAB, £37.50 for GCSE at SEG, and £41 for A level at the Associated Examining Board.

Sometimes examination boards will offer an appeals arrangement to cover two linked subjects, such as GCSE English and English literature. They may also accept inquiries for one individual component or one individual module for half the fee.

If course work is the sticking problem, a senior moderator can be appointed by the board to reassess the work, provided it has been kept by the centre and not returned to candidates. Again, it is better to seek such a review in conjunction with a report.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority makes no charge for an appeal at any level. Of the 46,494 appeals it received last year, 44.6 per cent resulted in an upgrade.

Of the boards charging, there is still a clear success ratio in appealing: NEAB adjusted 1,745 GCSE grades of the 3,684 requests last year (out of 8,030 candidates). At A level, 597 grades changed from the 2,119 appeals.

The appeal is not the end of the process. One board, for instance, which had been asked to carry out a remark, issued an open postcard, confirming the grade within 48 hours. It is almost beyond the bounds of credibility that its retrieval system could identify the candidate's papers, send them to a fresh examiner, receive their marks, compare them with the original, carry out a clerical check, look at grade thresholds and dispatch its considered views in this time. For confidence and future study, dates, parents and tutors should seek a written report.

If either the appeal result or manner in which it was carried out is unsatisfactory, ask the board to ensure that the correct procedures for remarking or remoderation took place. This may be two stages with an awards and review committee followed, if appropriate, by an appeal panel as the board's final arbiter.

The final stage is beyond the board. The Independent Appeals Authority was set up at the request of the Secretary of State for Education in 1990 and is funded by the Government.

Last year it received nine appeals and has so far decided on three — all in favour of the appellants against the boards. In 1995 and 1994, it heard five and 12 appeals respectively. The authority will act only when the appeals processes of the board concerned have been exhausted.

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Manchester girls repeat success

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

THE sixth-formers of Withington Girls' School, Manchester, who topped the Times GCSE league table two years ago, have repeated the feat at A level. The independent day school was the only one in Britain to average more than nine points, mid-way between A and B grade, for every A level.

The updated table is reprinted here because it was missing from some editions last Saturday. A ranking of state and independent schools at GCSE will be published tomorrow.

Today's listing is not exhaustive. Some of the leading state schools have not submitted their results, and not all of the top-scoring private schools belong to the Independent Schools Information Service (Istis), which publishes results for the independent sector.

Withington School is the main beneficiary of a change in the way The Times league table of A levels is compiled. In previous years, schools have been ranked on the average number of points achieved by each pupil; today's order is determined by the average points for each subject entry.

The change is intended to even out significant differences between schools in the number of A levels taken by each pupil. Some of the top schools in previous tables have entered pupils for an average of half an A level more than others.

In the two St Paul's schools, in London, for example, the boys took 3.5 subjects each on average this summer, whereas the girls took only 3.1. Under the old system, the boys' school (top last year) would have appeared in third place rather than 17th, while the girls move from 17th to second.

Of last year's leading schools, Eton College suffers most from the switch, almost slipping out of the top 20 for the first time. The school would have been seventh under the old system. Judged on points per pupil, Winchester College (fourth last year) would have headed the table, and Westminster School would have remained second.

Withington, like many of the leading girls' schools, generally enters pupils for only three A levels. It was the only school in Britain to average more than nine points for each examination taken.

Margaret Kenyon, the headmistress, said: "We never stop girls from taking more if they have a particular interest they want to pursue, but we think that for most girls three A levels is enough. No university requires more, and we want to leave time for our general programme and other activities like voluntary service. They have got to have a life."

Schools with fewer than ten candidates have been excluded from the ranking. The table is based on university entrance scores: an A at A level is worth ten points, B 8, C 6, D 4 and E 1. An A at AS level is worth five points, B 4, C 3, D 2 and E 1. The total is divided by the number of subject entries, with each AS examination counting as half an entry. General studies results are excluded.

Independent schools' results were provided by Istis; state schools' were collected by Christina Awusu Owusu, Elizabeth Judge, Lukei Li, Alice Lythgoe-Goldstein, Nazanine Moshiri, Ifana Vail.

GUIDE TO THE HIGHEST-RANKING STATE AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

State Schools in bold type	No of pupils	A level points avg*
1 Withington Girls Sch, Manchester Girls	71	9.04
2 St Paul's Sch, London Girls	52	8.92
3 Winchester Coll, Winchester Boys	134	8.94
4 North London Collegiate Sch, Edgware Girls	100	8.90
5 St Mary's Sch, London Girls	100	8.85
6 St Helen's Sch, Liverpool Girls	100	8.85
7 Manchester Grammar Sch, Manchester Boys	186	8.85
8 St Paul's Sch, London Girls	186	8.85
9 Wycombe Abbey Sch, High Wycombe Girls	76	8.77
10 St Mary's Sch, London Girls	38	8.76
11 St Mary's Sch, London Girls	38	8.76
12 King's Coll Sch, London Boys	133	8.68
13 St Mary's Sch, London Girls	38	8.67
14 St Mary's Sch, London Girls	38	8.67
15 St Mary's Sch, London Girls	38	8.67
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Whitaker puts Britain back in the chase

But his round unwittingly helped Beerbaum, the last but two to go. "I watched John," the 1992 Olympic champion said afterwards, "and decided that he didn't look as if he was going to have many fences down over the next three days — so I had to take my chance and go for it." One of the most stylish riders the sport has seen, Beerbaum produced a breathtakingly short turn into the water, got away with it and completed the course in 74.21sec.

The first Britain rider, Geoff Billington, on It's Otto, was dispatched by Ronnie Massarella, the team manager, with orders to go for a steady clear. Billington took the

Basketball is dominated by statistics and Congreaves can count some impressive ones of her own. At 6ft 2in, she complements this inherent advantage with speed and athleticism — not to mention a versatility that requires regular role changes in open play. She is deployed according to the opposition's strength; last night she was asked to counter the menace of



Cynthia Cooper, the league's leading points-scorer. Over the ten-week regular season, she excelled against opponents that she described as "the legends which encouraged all of us to play the game back in Britain".

Congreaves' conversion to professional basketball arrived entirely by chance. She was spotted playing for Crystal Palace juniors at a youth tournament in Helsinki and was offered a sports scholarship at Mercer College, Atlanta. She excelled over her four years, prompting Mercer to "retire" her No. 3 vest. Nevertheless, the thought of playing professionally, a

Two more surprises would bring an improbable championship to Charlotte. Even more improbable, within the scenario, is that Congreaves has been a potent ingredient within the Sting. "I just don't want it to end," she said. "If I was back home, I'd have looked on this league in awe. It's hard to get used to the idea that I'm a part of it." An increasingly influential part, too.

The main event for Britain today is the 4,000 metres team pursuit, for which Obree has not been selected. The quartet will be Rob Hayles, Matthew Illingworth, Jon Clay and Bryan Steel.

(3 points for each improved place): G Berger 24 points; M Sato 21; J Herbert 18; E Irvine 18; J Magnusson 15; U Katayama 15; H-H Frenzen 9; G Morbidelli 9; M Schumacher 6; J Villeneuve 6; M Hakkinen 6. **Fastest lap** time of grand prix: F Fisichella 10 points. **Penalty points**. **Incident resulting in a driver being made to start from back of grid** or pit lane (10 points deducted): R Schumacher -10 points; J Trulli -10. **Did not finish the race** (10 points deducted): E Irvine -10 points; D Hill -10; U Katayama -10; J Verstappen -10; R Schumacher -10; D Coulthard -10; T Marques -10; R Barrichello -10; S Nakano -10. **Not starting after qualifying** (10 points deducted): none. **Speeding in the pit lane** (3 points deducted): none. **CONSTRUCTORS** **Finishing points** (scored for the first car only in the top 20 positions at the end of every grand prix): Ferrari 30 points; Jordan 25; McLaren 24; Williams 23; Sauber 22; Benetton 20; Arrows 19; Tyrrell 15; Stewart 14; Minardi 12; Prost 11. **Penalty points** (incident resulting in a car being made to start from back of grid or pit lane (10 points deducted): Jordan -10 points; Prost -10. **Elimination of a car during the race** (10 points deducted): Minardi -20 points; Ferrari -10; McLaren -10; Jordan -10; Prost -10; Arrows -10; Tyrrell -10; Stewart -10. **Not starting after qualifying** (10 points deducted): none. **Speeding in the pit lane** (5 points deducted): none.

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Times writers focus on the challenge facing British clubs in Europe before today's cup draws

Premiership finest can redress the balance of power

ROY KEANE, the captain of Manchester United, said at the start of the season that it really was not that big a deal. Of course, he and his teammates were eager to do well in the Champions' League but no, it was not a higher priority than winning the FA Cup Premiership again. Today, he will find out if he really meant it.

At midday, at Uefa's headquarters in Geneva, the draws for the Champions' League, the Cup Winners' Cup and the Uefa Cup will be made and an English football season that has already superseded most of its predecessors in terms of the hype generated at its start, will scale new heights of excitement.

Post-Heyssel, and the ban on English clubs from competing in Europe, our leading sides have hardly distinguished themselves against the best teams from Italy, Spain and Germany. There have been isolated triumphs, such as United's Cup Winners' Cup victory over Barcelona in 1991 and Arsenal's win against Parma in the same competition three years later, but that is it.

This year, though, there is real optimism that Premiership teams might enjoy a resurgence against continental opposition. It has been fostered by Newcastle United's fine qualifying victory over a highly rated Croatia Zagreb side that was completed in Zagreb on Wednesday night. For the first time, England will have two representatives in the Champions' League.

But Newcastle and Manchester United will have an uphill task qualifying from whichever of the six groups of four they find themselves in. Waiting for them in the draw are a forbidding list of Europe's leading clubs: Real Madrid, with Roberto Carlos and Raul; Juventus, with Zidane and Del Piero; Bayern Munich, AS Monaco, Paris Saint-Germain, Galatasaray, Borussia Dortmund and Barcelona, with Sonny Anderson, Figo and Rivaldo.

United have not been named among the top seeds for the competition so are bound to have to finish above one of Dortmund, Juventus, Real Madrid, Monaco, Bayern Munich and PSV Eindhoven, the nominated clubs, if they are to qualify automatically for the next round. United are in the second pot of teams, Newcastle in the third, but the rules state that they cannot be drawn in the same group.

With their comparative wealth of European experience, Alex Ferguson's side may be the better placed to progress to the next phase of the competition. They were beaten home and away by Dortmund in the semi-finals last season, but they were far from outclassed. A shot from Nicky Butt in the first leg in Germany, which hit the post, and bounced away to safety, might have changed the tie entirely had it gone in.

In the Premiership, United are still not firing on all cylinders, coasting through their opening four matches, unbeaten, but not playing at their formidable best. They were undone by their poor finishing in the second leg against Dortmund last season and, despite the addition of Teddy Sheringham, their attack may once again be their weak link against sides that ruthlessly punish profligacy.

Newcastle, of course, will be without Alan Shearer for the first swathe of matches, which begin on September 17, and

for others besides. Their victory over Zagreb, though, will have given them more confidence and Faustino Asprilla seems to be relishing the responsibility handed to him in Shearer's absence. They would not be the first team to sneak in by a back door and surprise clubs who had walked straight into the Champions' League.

More than either of the English clubs in the leading competition, though, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea represent the best opportunity for success for Premiership sides in Europe this season. The London clubs have already shown signs that they have improved enough since last season to mount concerted challenges for the domestic championship, and Liverpool are beginning to find their form.

Chelsea, with their galaxy of foreign stars, probably have the best chance of all in the Cup Winners' Cup, a competition that is traditionally the weakest of the three and which has been further devalued by the fact that many countries' cup-winners have also finished second in their national championships and have, therefore, moved into the Champions' League.

Liverpool got to the semi-finals of the Cup Winners' Cup last season and the additions of Paul Ince, Oyvind Leonhardsen and Karlheinz Riedle should make them a force in the Uefa Cup, where they will face opposition of the high quality of Ajax, Anderlecht, Deportivo La Coruña, Lazio, Spartak Moscow, Rangers and Celtic.

Arsenal, too, will start among the favourites with their increasingly potent front two of Dennis Bergkamp and Ian Wright, and the rich European experience of men such as Marc Overmars and Emmanuel Petit. Aston Villa may find it hard to overcome their poor start to the domestic season and Leicester City are better bets to spring a few surprises.



Bergkamp: potent force

OLIVER HOLT



Asprilla and Ketsbaia celebrate after the Georgia midfielder's winner for Newcastle against Zagreb

Rangers' riches come to naught

Supporters have the choice of assaulting their digestive systems with a Blue Nose Burger, a Champion's hot dog or a Loyal Bacon Bap. They are urged to buy three replica kits, two bigoted fanzines and a whole range of products in dub tartan. The Ibrox authorities, following the great Glasgow tradition of money-lending, can also arrange personal loans of up to £15,000 within 24 hours. All Rangers cannot offer is a team capable of responding to the challenge of European football.

Their lamentable attempt to qualify for the Champions' League, which ended with a 4-1 aggregate defeat by IFK Gothenburg on Wednesday, was merely the latest example of the dangers of rationalised introspection and the shortcomings of an institution that appears to know the price of everything and the value of nothing. An 18-man squad, assembled for £26 million and a small fortune in Bosman-style signing-on fees, was embarrassed beyond measure

by the basic disciplines of a team that cost little more than £1 million.

The prospect of Rangers exploiting the booby prize of a Uefa Cup place is hardly enticing. Their tactical naivety against the Swedes was as breathtaking as some of the fees paid for spectacularly limited players. Sergio Porrini, a £3.5 million cast-off from Serie A, has the pace and positional sense of a myopic poodle. The hap-hazard violence of Jorg Albert's shooting is somehow deemed to be worth £4 million.

Marco Negri, another £3.5 million export from Italy, may be able to score goals at will in the frenzied mediocrity of the Scottish League, but he lacks the speed of thought and movement to outwit top-quality defenders.

'Ibrox now seems to be a rest home for the aged and infirm'

At any other club, Walter Smith, the manager who spent £15 million in another flawed rebuilding programme over the summer, would have been burned in effigy. Yet he has a place on the board, the promise of a testimonial match and the perk of a new three-year contract. Incomprehensibly, he shows every sign of cultivating a seige mentality. Faced with obvious failings, ranging from defensive indiscipline to an inability to retain possession, he offered only a doleful stare and a mumbled admission that "we will have to brush up on that".

Smith has been aged by assumptions of domestic superiority and knows as well as anyone that the cardinal sin of exclusion from the Champions' League will be forgiven by Monday night if Rangers win at Celtic Park. Victory over Celtic will deepen the air of inevitability that already consumes the pursuit of a tenth successive Scottish title. Football's endless season, Rangers' 37th in Europe, will stretch ahead uninvitingly, with only the uncertainty of Scotland's World Cup prospects acting as a diversion.

Even in that sense, Rangers are a hindrance. Their recruitment policy does little to help Craig Brown's cause. Only five of the squad against Gothenburg were Scottish; only ten of the 26 players used in seven games this season are

home-grown. The irony is that Ibrox's resident Australians, Craig Moore and Tony Vidmar, have perhaps the best chance of being in France next summer. Gascoigne, who has lost an alarming amount of weight, remains too ephemeral a figure to be entrusted with a key role in the England squad. Occasional glimpses of skill are, as usual, negated by a lack of stamina and ill-directed aggression.

This, of course, did not prevent the Rangers fans below "we are the people" in the dying moments on Wednesday night. Scottish football remains trapped in a time warp of tribal loyalties. The atmosphere is hateful, yet no one bats an eyelid at an obscene range of anti-Celtic material is peddled in the shadows of Ibrox's red-brick walls. The Old Firm match between the respective reserve teams, at Ibrox tomorrow, will draw Scotland's biggest gate of the weekend by far. Mercifully, the clubs are being kept apart in the Uefa Cup draw.

Robert Andersson, scorer of Gothenburg's equaliser, criticised the manifest weaknesses of the Rangers defence, yet still tipped them to reach the final. It was left to Mats Jirngblad, his manager, to puncture the pretence of respect. "They could do well," he said, with arched eyebrows, "but there are a lot of good clubs in the Uefa Cup. It will be difficult for them because of their supporters. They make them nervous. That's not the way to play in Europe."

MICHAEL CALVIN

Newcastle look to join new elite

By DAVID MADDOCK

IT WILL only be today, when Newcastle United await with some apprehension the draw for the Champions' League, that the full implications of their two-legged victory over Croatia Zagreb will be grasped. The 2-2 draw after extra time on Wednesday night, which saw Newcastle progress to the group stage of the European Cup, will have pleased Sir John Hall, the club chairman, not least because of the riches on offer for reaching the later stages of the Champions' League.

That is merely a side issue, though. No matter how lucky Newcastle were in qualifying — and they were extremely lucky — the fact that they take their place alongside Manchester United in the draw in Geneva today is heavy with significance for the whole of English football. For this latest incarnation of the European Cup is a super league in all but name.

That is why it is so important for England to be represented by two clubs in the group stage. To fail to do so would have serious implications for the future. Italy and Germany are, undoubtedly, the dominant powers at present. They have the television muscle to dictate to the other countries and, of course, the best teams. Behind them come Spain, France and Holland, and farther behind are Portugal and England.

England needs two clubs in the group stages to guarantee the coefficient points to guarantee a continuing significant presence



Peacock out for two weeks

ence in the competition in the future. It was a point not lost on Sir John.

"European football is about to move to the next dimension and we have got to be part of it," he said. "It is obviously the future and we need to be involved to help shape it. Clubs with ambition have got to project the best image across the Continent and, obviously, the best way to do that is to be part of the Champions' League, to be part of what may well be perceived as a European super league."

Of course, the primary consideration for Newcastle must be the financial wellbeing of the club itself and they did themselves no harm by sneaking past Zagreb on what was a bizarre night in Croatia. Whatever happens now they are guaranteed to earn at least £3 million from the groups stage.

Even Kenny Dalglish, the Newcastle manager, would not hide from the fact that his side had not played particularly well over the two legs against Zagreb and mutterings of a conspiracy against the smaller nations were expressed in the sour comments of Marjan Vlak, the Zagreb coach. He said: "The referee was a butcher. He made it an impossible job for my team and ruined the game. We are a small nation and we could do without referees like that stopping a small nation from succeeding."

Vlak has a case. Newcastle's second goal in the first leg was created under dubious circumstances, and the penalty in the second leg, which ultimately decided the tie, was again questionable. And Asprilla should, perhaps, have been punished more severely for an apparent elbow into an opponent's face. Asprilla may yet face sanction because the Uefa observer at the game has suggested that he may contradict the referee's report about the incident and, should he do so, the Columbian forward may face a ban.

There was further bad news for Newcastle last night when it was discovered that Stuart Pearce, injured in Zagreb, will be out for at least two weeks. On the flight back to the North East in the early hours of yesterday morning, however, the inescapable feeling was one of relief and achievement. It is a sense that should be shared throughout English football.

DAVID MADDOCK

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

The last few Refreshers have covered the subject of ducking the opening lead against a No-Trump contract. But there are times when the best play is to win immediately:

♠ A65		♠ Q8
♥ A5		♥ Q10632
♦ J10884		♦ 765
♣ J43		♣ 997
♠ K10943	N	♠ Q8
♥ J94	W	♥ Q10632
♦ A3	E	♦ 765
♣ Q108	S	♣ 997
♠ J72		♠ Q8
♥ K87		♥ Q10632
♦ KQ2		♦ 765
♣ AK52		♣ 997

Contract: Three No-Trumps by South. Lead: ten of spades

If declarer ducks West's opening lead, East wins the queen and continues the suit. Declarer holds off until the third round, but then has to play on diamonds. West takes his ace and cashes two more spades to take the contract one off.

Many declarers would claim that was unlucky — had both spade honours for his overall. That is certainly possible, but what would he have led from KQ10xx in the suit? Surely a high honour. Thus after the lead of the ten East is marked with the queen or king of spades, either singleton or doubleton.

Look at the effect of winning trick one with the ace of spades. What does East do? If he plays low, the suit is now blocked. When West wins his ace of diamonds he can play a spade to East's queen but there is no way West can regain the lead before declarer has enough tricks.

On the other hand, if East unblocks his queen of spades, he is no better off as he can't get in to play a spade through declarer's jack. Whatever happens declarer will make his contract with one spade, two hearts, four diamonds and two clubs.

Another combination where this blocking play occurs is dummy holding Axx opposite declarer's 10xxx. If West leads low he will not have underlined KQJxx, so rising with the ace blocks the suit when East has started with a doubleton honour. Playing low allows the defence to set up the suit.

For details of *The Times* Midland Private Banking National Bridge Challenge, call the organisers on 0181-942 9506.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Brief encounters

I conclude my coverage of the chess sections of the Mind Sports Olympiad held last week at the Royal Festival Hall, London with two miniature wins. A miniature in chess is defined as a win achieved in 25 moves or less. In the first game, Luke McShane, 13, scores in lightning fashion while in the second, grandmaster Stuart Conquest defeats the eight-year-old whose strategic masterpiece I published in this column yesterday.

White: McShane
Black: Timms

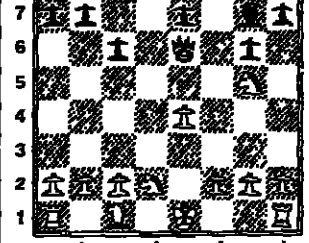
Mind Sports Olympiad August 1997

Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4	c5
2 d3	d5
3 Nd2	dxc4
4 dxc4	g6
5 Ng3	Bg4
6 Bc4	Bx7
7 Bx7+	Kx7
8 Ng5+	Kx8
9 Qxg4	Qd6
10 Qc8+	

Black resigns

Diagram of final position



White: Conquest
Black: Thirumuran

White to play. This position is from the game Levy — Fuller, Praia da Rocha 1969.

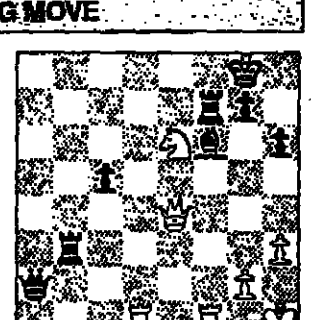
Black is a pawn up, but his queen and rook are far from the defence of his king — a factor which White now swiftly exploited. How did the game continue?

Times book

The *Times* Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 0176 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE



Solution on page 42

HOW THE ENGLISH GO

CHAMPIONS' LICE

Manchester United
Alex Ferguson has a dream. To win the Champions' League, to brush aside the continental crème de la crème and to exercise the spoils of 1967-68 that still lingers at Old Trafford. Only if United emulate the exploits of their illustrious predecessors — Best, Charlton et al — can Ferguson truly claim entry to football's managerial Hall of Fame. They came within touching distance last season, when losing to Borussia Dortmund, the eventual champions, in the semi-finals, and should again mount a similar challenge. Canitona has gone but he rarely shone in foreign fields, anyway. Captain Keane is settling in nicely and Beckham has rested and returned. 1998 could be the year. Arise Sir Alex, champion of champions.

Number of seasons in Europe: 21. Best performance: European Cup winners 1967-68. Cup winners: 1993-94. Odds: 5-1.

Newcastle United

It still grates that Newcastle United are among such select company. How can they be when they finished only runners-up in the Premiership last season? Is it not the fault of Newcastle and, anyway, some might argue that their stirring qualifying performance against Croatia Zagreb merits them a tilt at the real thing, even if their involvement is likely to go no further than the group rounds. Much will depend on the speed of recovery of Alan Shearer. With him, Newcastle could sneak through into the later stages without him, St James' Park will weep bucketfuls.

Seasons in Europe: 7. Best Inter-Cities Fairs Cup winners 1969-70. Cup winners: 1971-72. Odds: 14-1.

Aston Villa

Few managers displayed a wider grin during the summer than

Seasons in Europe: 13. Best Inter-Cities Fairs Cup winners 1969-70. Cup winners: 1993-94. Odds: 14-1.

CUP WINNERS' CUP

Chelsea

It might seem a trifle piffing to denigrate the Cup Winners' Cup before it has barely started but it is hardly the most competitive bunt-fight this season. Nice is undoubtedly a nice place but the French representatives are unlikely to send out too many

CHAMPIONS' LICE

shockwaves from the sun-kissed Côte d'Azur. Neither are Vienna, of Italy, or Roda JC, of Holland, and it is small wonder that Chelsea have been made joint-favourites, with Stungart, to capture the trophy. Round Gullit and his greybeard accomplice, Ken Bates, could be a-bugging and a-jiggling down the King's Road at the end of the season.

Seasons in Europe: 7. Best Cup Winners' Cup winners 1970-71. Odds: 3-1.

Arsenal

Arsenal miss Tony Adams, warts and all, and will not settle defensively until he returns from injury. When the going gets tough in downtown Atlanta Vladavlatov or, more likely, Udinese, they will need his strength and leadership. Arsène Wenger must also cut out the indiscipline among his troops if they are to progress into the closing stages of the Uefa Cup, which the club won under its former guise of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup in 1969-70, but Arsenal should still go far, in their thirteenth season in Europe, with Wenger's vast experience and tactical nous guaranteed to test any opponents.

Seasons in Europe: 13. Best Inter-Cities Fairs Cup winners 1969-70. Cup winners: 1993-94. Odds: 14-1.

Liverpool

England's most experienced European campaigners, on their 26th sortie, should again fly the flag with credit, especially now that Paul Ince, the former gunner of Manchester United and Internazionale, is beginning to settle amid his new surroundings. What price a Liverpool-Inter meeting as the Uefa Cup reaches its concluding stages? Whatever they achieve, though, history will always weigh them down. How do they equal or surpass the achievements of the Arsenal legends, whose six European triumphs are still recalled with great reverence on Merseyside.

Seasons in Europe: 26. Best European Cup winners 1976-77, 1977-78, 1981-82, 1983-84. Uefa Cup winners: 1972-73, 1973-74. Odds: 10-1.

RUSSELL KEMPSON

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

SIMOLEON
a. The lion monkey
b. A star
c. A dollar

TAZIA
a. Semolina bread
b. Processional tombs
c. A Mullah's whip

WILIWILI
a. A Rocky Mountain wind
b. A female ghost
c. A coral tree

STEPIF FETCHIT
a. An Uncle Tom
b. A game with skittles
c. A cook's apron

Answers on page 42

CRICKET

Waqar holds key to Glamorgan's hopes of victory

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

LEICESTER (second day of four, Leicestershire won toss): Glamorgan have scored 180 for seven wickets against Leicestershire

THIS was not, superficially, a great day for the Welsh Glamorgan, already badly delayed by rain, suffered a steady batting decline when play did begin at Grace Road, and Steve James's phenomenal sequence of scores ended on the day when two England selectors came to watch him.

Neither Glamorgan nor their prolific opener should despair just yet. A shortened game on an untrustworthy pitch is still there to be won and James, despite his untimely failure, remains an odds-on chance to tour West Indies this winter.

Glamorgan, who began this round of matches two points clear of Kent, are still 20 runs short of a batting point after losing wickets steadily to the Leicestershire seam attack. Before poor light ended play 18 overs early, however, Waqar Younis was laying about him to some effect and it is his bowling that could turn the match today.

No county has endured more rain this season than Leicestershire. It has cost them an effective defence of the championship but, on this occasion, the weather was regarded far more by their opponents. After a blank first day, the surrounds remained too wet for play to start before 2pm yesterday and Glamorgan, put in to bat, soon discovered why.

Even without the injured Mullally, Leicestershire were not short of suitable bowlers and James Whitaker, the captain, rotated them briskly through the day. He tried the off-spin of Pierson as early as the seventh over, not without effect, but the early breaches were made by David Mills.

Hustling in with his customary hostility, Mills dismissed both members of the season's most successful opening pair in his sixth over. David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, had been on the ground since midday but his colleague, Graham Gooch, had only just arrived to make a technical appraisal of James when he drove loosely and edged a catch to Nixon.

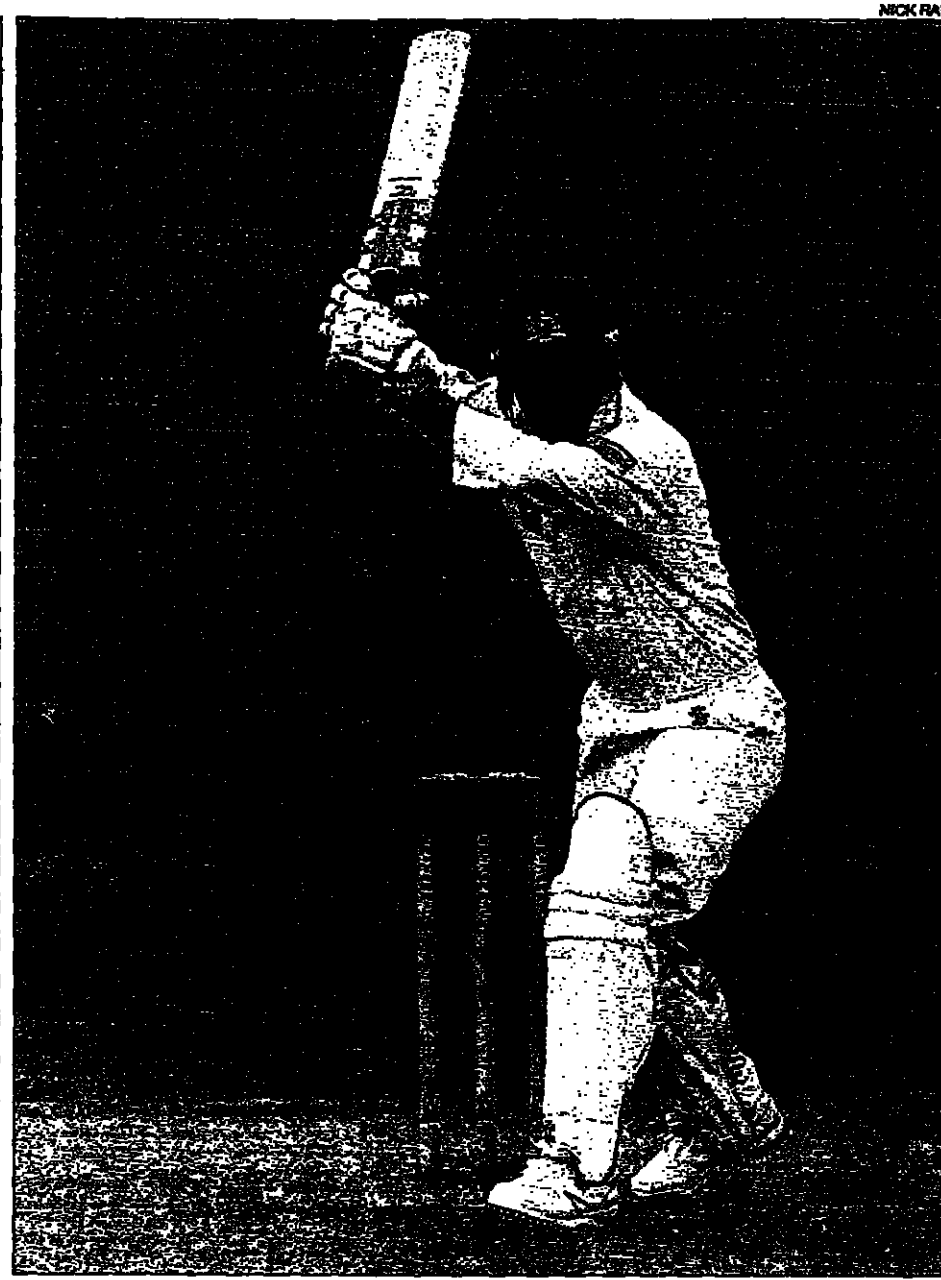
After a series of scores reading 62, 69, 130, 103 and 113, James will feel that this was a bad moment to miss out. The selectors, though, are unlikely to dismiss him on a single failure after a summer of seven championship centuries. His technique may not be elegant but it is triumphantly functional.

Morris lost his off stump to a good one from Mills, who eventually made way for an incisive second spell by the stocky and highly promising James Ormond. Michael Powell stayed ten overs for three but Matthew Maynard, recovered from a dislocated finger, did not linger. Both were out to inappropriate drives.

The Leicestershire huddle, a rarer sighting this season, was now back in full session but a determined stand of 55 between Dale and Cottee showed that batting was not impossible. Once again, however, two wickets fell in quick succession, this time taken by the championship debutant, Dominic Williamson.

Bowling at medium pace, Williamson took his first wicket by straying from his disciplined line, Cottee chasing a wide one outside off stump. Two balls later, he produced a far more deserving ball to hit Shaw's off stump and leave Glamorgan on 126 for six.

Dale was leg-before to the gentle swing of Wells, but Waqar arrived breathing fire, and Ormond was the victim. From a single Ormond over, Waqar took 16 runs, including an immense driven six over extra-cover that must rate as one of the shots of the season. His bowling today could have a significant influence.



Dawson, the promising young Gloucestershire batsman, shoulders arms to Tolley

Gloucestershire hit by double blow after elongated break

By JOHN THICKNESSE

BRISTOL (second day of four): Gloucestershire, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are 210 runs behind Nottinghamshire

GLoucestershire's chance of tightening their hold on third place in the championship weakened yesterday when rain interrupted a partnership between Tim Hancock and Bobby Dawson when each was playing at or near his best. When play restarted, all too briefly, both were out without adding to their score, leaving Nottinghamshire a distinct advantage in a game that looks like being difficult for either side to win.

Even though Mike Smith returned his fifth haul of five or more wickets in an innings by taking the two wickets outstanding overnight, the fact that the Nottinghamshire tailenders held out for 40 minutes inconvenienced Gloucestershire at a time when they needed to be bat-

ting. Smith trapped Evans leg-before and knocked out Oram's middle stump with inswingers to finish with six for 83.

Nottinghamshire's 294 was a competitive score on a pitch well-suited to seam bowling and on a slow outfield, and within seven overs of the Gloucestershire reply it took on extra stature. Bowen's first ball, a textbook outswinger, hit Trainor on the back leg to pin him leg-before and half an hour later he flattened Windows's middle stump.

Gloucestershire could have been in worse trouble had lock run for Bowen. Hancock scoring his first runs fine of gully while aiming at mid-off. Later, however, when Oram dropped one short and wide, Hancock pulled it fiercely to long-on, from which time he was firmly in control.

Dawson's arrival rounded off a rare spectacle in county cricket, that of two uncapped bowlers bowling to two uncapped batsmen, all of whom

bar Oram were over 25 years old. The quartet battled evenly for half an hour before Tolley replaced Oram and in five overs of wayward left-arm inswinging conceded 47 runs, Dawson opening with a terrific punched straight drive before he and Hancock began scoring freely off their legs.

The extended lunch break, however, ended their promising partnership of 49. On the resumption, Hancock fell to Evans's first ball. Young began with one of the best strokes of the match, driving Evans through extra cover, but when Oram found Dawson's edge for "Noon" to take his second catch inside four overs, Gloucestershire were 74 for four.

In a combined 64 innings in ten matches since the beginning of June, including this one against Nottinghamshire, the top five in the Gloucestershire batting order have passed 50 on only nine occasions, only two of which have grown to hundreds.

Stephenson shines amid the showers

By JACK BAILEY

PORTSMOUTH (second day of four): Hampshire have scored 210 for five wickets against Kent

THE honours were shared between Dean Headley, the Kent and England opening bowler, John Stephenson, the Hampshire captain, and Bob Wheelton, the head groundsman of the United Services ground and his staff. It was difficult to set them out in order of merit, but certainly the hardest-worked were the ground staff. The covers were whipped on and off with great efficiency as frequent showers sent the players scuttling and play took place in five brief bursts.

Sixty-three overs were lost, but not before Headley had been responsible for Kent moving to a share of the championship lead, if only for a few heady hours. His removal of White, Keetch and Smith earned Kent the two bowling points necessary to overtake Glamorgan and his ability to move the ball away from the right-handed batsman. The recipient of two official warnings for running on the pitch, he avoided the ultimate penalty meted out recently to his colleague, McCague, having opened with a lively spell of two for

eight in six overs. Stephenson's undefeated 54 contained batting on a higher plane than that of anyone.

He struck the ball with clean authority, while others, understandably, laboured on a pitch continually freshened by rain. Right from the start, he got after Paul Strang, taking four fours off a couple of overs from the Zimbabwean.

He dealt confidently, too, with the quicker bowlers, despite four interruptions to an innings that brought him a half-century from 81 balls and contained, in all, nine fours.

Stephenson came to the wicket when White, having batted decently for his 44, had been caught behind pushing at a classical full-length outswinger and, six balls later, Keetch had departed in similar manner. This time, it was a brilliant left-handed catch, low down at second slip by Ward that claimed Headley's second victim.

Smith was embattled but soldiered on. He was eventually leg-before, playing well forward, but not before Headley, who had signalled his intention of making Kent fight hard for every advantage.

Challenge falls apart at the seam

By PAT GIBSON

KIDDERMINSTER (second day of four): Worcestershire, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are 162 runs behind Middlesex

IT IS always a gamble producing batters to suit your own purposes because they sometimes suit the opposition more. Worcestershire learnt that the hard way against Middlesex yesterday.

Anything the Worcestershire bowlers could do on an uncharacteristic green, seaming surface the Middlesex attack could do better and they had reduced the hosts to 90 for four when rain set in halfway through the afternoon.

Worcestershire were always improbable championship challengers, but they were still in with a chance when they bowled Middlesex out for 252. Sherivar, their emerging left-arm fast bowler, finishing with five for 55.

They would have been in a stronger position if it had not been for David Nash, the former England under-19 wicketkeeper. In his neat, quick-footed style Nash scored 64 on his championship debut against Durham last week and yesterday he was unbeaten on 45 as Middlesex lost their last three wickets for 35. If Middlesex had found run scoring difficult, however, Worcestershire were soon making it seem almost impossible. Wesion was leg before in Hewitt's second over, and then Hick failed to score off 19 balls before the demanding Fraser had him caught at short leg.

Moody did try to exert some authority with six fours in 32, but he was out in the first over after he was caught by Pooley at second slip off Kallis. When Spiring was caught low at cover point, again by Pooley, the innings almost ground to a halt.

Gallian brought into line by umpire Plews

By BARNEY SPENDER

OLD TRAFFORD (second day of four): Lancashire, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 284 runs behind Yorkshire

THE cricket at Old Trafford yesterday was rather like the weather that robbed this Roses match of another 24.5 overs: generally gloomy with a couple of bright spots.

The sunshine was provided principally by Chris Silverwood, the nightwatchman, who made a career-best 38. He added 79 with Darren Lehmann before Peter Martin found the Australian's inside edge and then put on 62 in brisk time with Craig White.

Later, Paul Hutchinson, their left-arm swing bowler, produced further evidence of his potential with a couple of wickets and Graham Lloyd raced rapidly to 35 not out to give Lancashire hope of reaching the follow-on mark of 270. Otherwise, it was uninspiring stuff with the darkest

patch coming in the shape of Jason Gallian, the Lancashire opener, whose apparently unrequited desire for "more authority" within the club (ie the captaincy) has led to speculation that he will soon be off to Middlesex.

Unfortunately, his authority at the crease has been severely undermined since Andre van Troost broke his little finger on June 4. Upon his return he had made just 84 runs in seven innings. Yesterday, that tally went up by ten but when he jammed down on a Hutchinson Yorker and saw the ball spinning back to knock off the balls, the frustration got the better of him.

With an angry swish of the bat he knocked out two stumps, prompting Nigel Plews, one of the umpires, to recall him and, like the good policeman he once was, have a quiet word before asking him to move along. Gallian apologised, but disciplinary action will doubtless follow.

Warwickshire given heart by Donald

By SIMON WILDE

CHELMSFORD (second day of four): Warwickshire, with five first-innings wickets in hand, are 42 runs behind Essex

ALLAN DONALD put Warwickshire in good heart for the NatWest Trophy final when he ran through Essex, their opponents at Lord's on Saturday, at Chelmsford yesterday. Donald took five for 16 in the day - five for 50 overall - as Essex lost their seven remaining wickets for 61 and were all out for 178. Warwickshire replied with 136 for five on another day disrupted by rain.

The fourth of Donald's wickets - Cowan, swinging optimistically, caught behind, one of five catches for Piper - was his 500th in 129 first-class matches for the county. He is the nineteenth bowler to reach the landmark and was naturally delighted. "It took me ten years to get to 500," he said. "It took Brian Lara two days."

Donald bowled with his usual skill and intelligence, cutting his pace on a slow, damp pitch on which batting was never straightforward, though Stuart Law, for Essex, and Knight, for Warwickshire, made it look so. Flanagan, the teenager making his debut, also showed coolness. Donald polished off the innings with a spell of 7.1-5-4-4.

The gloss was taken off another authoritative innings from Law, whose 54 is the highest score of the game, by the announcement that Essex had fined him £300 for using abusive language during the NatWest Trophy semi-final against Glamorgan. On the instructions of the England and Wales Cricket Board's disciplinary committee, the club had studied video evidence of the acrimonious dispute. Law was also severely reprimanded and warned as to his future conduct for using an expletive as he left the field after his dismissal.

Somerset held up by Cassar

By JOHN STERN

DERBY (second day of four): Somerset, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 299 runs behind Derbyshire

THIS season is Matthew Cassar's first as an England-qualified player and until yesterday he has not had a happy time, having sustained an ankle injury in the nets before the start of the season.

In only his fourth in championship game, and his first by name in boundaries, the Sydney-born player has found himself. The depletion of Derbyshire's batting through the absence of Chris Adams, who has tonsillitis, and an injury to Adrian Rollins, left Cassar much to do when he came in at 108 for four.

He responded by taking two fours off Mustard, and also drove well against Burns and Shine. When Krikken was yanked by Shine, Derbyshire were 153 for six and required a weighty contribution from DeFreitas. He obliged.

Batting in his customarily flamboyant manner, the Derbyshire captain made a half-century from 35 balls. Cassar had reached his first championship fifty two overs earlier with a cut off Ross.

DeFreitas's innings ended when he edged Ross to leg and was caught athletically by Turner for 58, all but six of which came in boundaries. Cassar was eighth out, caught off bat and pad, and the dismissal of Malcolm should have brought Derbyshire's innings to a close.

However, Rollins, hobbling dreadfully because of his fractured kneecap, emerged with a runner to assist Lacey in accruing a third batting point. Lacey scored his maiden fifty before he became Caddick's fourth victim. Somerset's innings was in its seventh over when the weather closed in.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Derbyshire v Somerset

DERBY (second day of four): Somerset, with all first-innings wickets in hand, are 299 runs behind Derbyshire

Derbyshire: First Innings
A.S. Pollard not out 13
M.R. May c Turner b Ross 28
T.A. Twiss b Ross 12
A. Hales c Turner b Ross 12
K.J. Bennett b Ross 16
D.S. Cook c Mustard b Caddick 78
M.E. Cassar c Turner b Mustard 78
Y.K. Krikken b Shine 14
P.A.J. DeFreitas c Turner b Ross 50
S.J. Lacey c Turner b Caddick 50
D.E. Malcom b Shine 30
Extras (b 7, w 4, nb 6) 17
Total (38 overs) 153
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-57, 2-71, 3-86, 4-108, 5-113, 6-153, 7-258, 8-268, 9-268, 10-268

Bowling: Caddick 38-11-56-4; Shine 22-5-50-3; Ross 20-5-79-3; Mustard 11-4-22-0; Burns 8-3-35-0; Hazlewood 10-5-1
SOMERSET: First Innings
R.J. Turner not out 12
P.C. Holford not out 10
Bates b 2.3.8
Total (no wkt, 6.2 overs) 84
S.C. Ecclesdale, M.N. Lafferty, M.E. Theobald, M. Burns, G.D. Brown, A.R. Caddick, A.H. Hales, A.H. Hales and K.J. Shine to bat
Bowling: Malcom 12-4-6-0; DeFreitas 3-0-0-0
Bonus points: Derbyshire 3 Somerset 4
Umpires: R. Julien and B. Leach

Essex v Warwickshire

CHELMSFORD (second day of four): Warwickshire, with five first-innings wickets in hand, are 42 runs behind Essex

Essex: First Innings
D.J. Robinson c Donald b Walsh 38
P. Hodgson c Piper b Walsh 21
M. Hoggart b Walsh 21
S.G. Law c Knight b Giles 54
M.C. East c Piper b Davies 16
A.P. Grayson c Piper b Donald 5
I.N. Flanagan not out 16
D.R. Law c Cottee b Donald 0
R.J. Fothergill c Piper b Giles 0
A.P. Cowan c Piper b Donald 14
P.M. Such b Cottee 12
Extras (b 1, lb 3, nb 2) 6
Total (36.1 overs) 178
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-29, 2-76, 3-83, 4-117, 5-141, 6-142, 7-142, 8-145, 9-145, 10-145
Bowling: Donald 23-1-50-5; Brown 15-3-50-1; Walsh 10-5-15-2; Giles 14-6-52-2

Warwickshire: First Innings
N.V. Knight b Walsh 48
A. Hales c Hoggart b Walsh 21
D.L. Hoggart b Walsh 21
D.P. O'Shea c Hoggart b Walsh 21
T. Purnell not out 12
M.K. Smith c Cowan 17
R.J. Pinner not out 10
Extras (b 8, lb 3, nb 4) 15
Total (36.1 overs) 136
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-2, 2-31, 3-58, 4-68, 5-132
Bowling: Cowan 11-0-58-2; O'Shea 9-3-23-1; Smith 13-1-42-2; Hoggart 21-1-10-0
Bonus points: Essex 2 Warwickshire 4
Umpires: J.D. Bond and J.F. Steele

Gloucestershire v Nottinghamshire

BRISTOL (second day of four): Gloucestershire, with six first-innings wickets in hand, are 210 runs behind Nottinghamshire

Gloucestershire: First Innings
M.P. Downes c Young b Smith 32
R. Robinson c Russell b Smith 28
N.J. Astle b Smith 0
D. Johnson c A. Hales 0
A. Hales b Smith 11
C. Alcock b Smith 20
C. Alcock b Smith 20
W.M. Neeson c Russell b Lewis 20
K.P. Evans b Smith 20
M.N. Bowen not out 31
A.R. Oram b Smith 4
Extras (b 4, lb 11, w 6, nb 6) 27
Total (34.3 overs) 207
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-101, 2-102, 3-102, 4-122, 5-141, 6-148, 7-228, 8-248, 9-278
Bowling: Smith 23-5-52-5; Lewis 12-4-42-2; Oram 21-4-42-2; Alcock 13-2-42-2; Ball 5-5-0-0

Nottinghamshire: First Innings
N. Taylor b Smith 0
M.G.N. Windows b Bowen 0
T.H. Hancock c Neeson b Evans 32
R. Dawson c Neeson b Oram 22
S. Young not out 8
P.M. Wainwright not out 8
Extras (b 2, lb 2, nb 6) 6
Total (4 wkt, 28 overs) 74
R.C. Russell, M.C.J. Ball, A.M. Smith, J. Lewis and D.V. Lawrence to bat
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0, 2-0, 3-0, 4-4
Bowling: Bowen 7-3-16-2; Oram 4-4-12-1; Taylor 5-1-27-0; Evans 8-1-15-1; Astle 4-0-0-0
Bonus points: Gloucestershire 4 Nottinghamshire 2
Umpires: T. Jesty and D.R. Shepherd

Hampshire v Kent

PORTSMOUTH (second day of four): Hampshire have scored 210 for five wickets against Kent

Hampshire: First Innings
J.S. Lacey b Eastham 24
M. Hayden b Headley b Eastham 28
S.W. Jones c Headley b Headley 24
R.A. Smith b Headley 42
M. Keetch b Ward b Headley 42
J.P. Stephenson not out 12
A.N. Haynes not out 11
Extras (b 3, lb 4) 11
Total (36.1 overs) 210
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-81, 3-121, 4-127, 5-130
Bowling: Headley 20-4-44-3; Phillips 12-4-42-2; Eastham 16-4-41-2; Fleming 15-4-42-2; Smith 18-4-41-2
KENT: D.P. Fulton, E.T. Smith, T.R. Ward, A.P. Wells, G.R. Cowdrey, M.A. Eastham, M.V. Fleming, S.A. Marsh, P.A. Strang, D.V. Headley, J.P. Phillips
Bonus points: Hampshire 1 Kent 2
Umpires: C. Kilsby and D.J. Conner

Lancashire v Yorkshire

OLD TRAFFORD (second day of four): Lancashire, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 284 runs behind Yorkshire

Lancashire: First Innings
A. McDonald c Viles 38
M.P. Downes c Viles 32
D. Johnson c Viles 28
D. Johnson c Viles 28
C.E.W. Silverwood c Martin b Williamson 52
C. White c Lloyd b Green 52
B. Fraser c Hogg b Austen 10
R.J. Bailey c Hogg b Green 10
R.D. Harrison b Viles b Green 10
Extras (b 5, lb 5, nb 18) 38
Total (36.1 overs) 419
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-89, 2-216, 3-222, 4-232, 5-244, 6-244, 7-244, 8-244, 9-244
Bowling: Martin 26-6-60-1; Austen 22-4-77-2; Green 25-2-85-3; Viles 21-4-68-1; Williamson 15-4-60-1; Gallian 7-0-48-1

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Northamptonshire v Durham

NORTHAMPTON (second day of four): Northamptonshire, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 28 runs behind Durham

Northamptonshire: First Innings
R.H. Margreth c Wicket b Bates 5
R.H. Margreth c Wicket b Bates 5
A. Farham c Wicket b Bates 22
J.P. Bailey c Wicket b Bates 22
J.P. Bailey c Wicket b Bates 22
A.L. Penberthy b Bates 18
D. Bailey b Bates 18
J.P. Taylor b Bates 18
Mohammed Akram c Spanght b Bates 18
Mohammed Akram c Spanght b Bates 18
F. Brown not out 16
Extras (b 1, lb 15, w 2, nb 4) 22
Total (34 overs) 144
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-11, 2-19, 3-25, 4-40, 5-56, 6-62, 7-64, 8-69, 9-77, 10-101
Bowling: Bates 13-3-53-1; Bates 22-7-64-2; Foster 8-1-18-0; Bailey 1-0-2-0

Northamptonshire v Durham

NORTHAMPTON (second day of four): Northamptonshire, with eight first-innings wickets in hand, are 28 runs behind Durham

Northamptonshire: First Innings
J.B. Lewis b Taylor 17
S. Hutton not out 46
R.H. Margreth c Wicket b Bates 5
A. Farham c Wicket b Bates 22
J.P. Bailey c Wicket b Bates 22
A.L. Penberthy b Bates 18
D. Bailey b Bates 18
J.P. Taylor b Bates 18
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Bowling: Bates 13-3-53-1; Bates 22-7-64-2; Foster 8-1-18-0; Bailey 1-0-2-0

Sussex v Surrey

HOVE (first day of four): Sussex have scored 102 for seven wickets against Surrey

Sussex: First Innings
M.T. Ealham c Wicket b Bates 0
R.K. Rao c A.J. Hollister b Bates 0
N.R. Taylor b Bates 1
J.P. Bailey c Wicket b Bates 22
A.L. Penberthy b Bates 18
D. Bailey b Bates 18
J.P. Taylor b Bates 18
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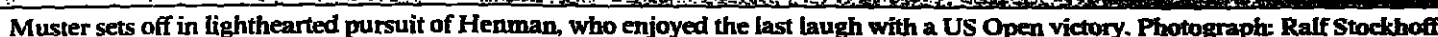
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D. Bailey b Bates 18
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Total (34 overs) 144
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-11, 2-19, 3-25, 4-40, 5-56, 6-62,

West
just a bank

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FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1: FM 97.8-99.8. **RADIO 2:** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3:** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4:** FM 92.4-94.8. **LW 198:** MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE:** MW 693, 908. **WORLD SERVICE:** MW 648; LW 138 (12 45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM:** MW 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO:** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO:** MW 1033, 1089. *Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Graevor and John McManera.*

What a bawdy carry-on

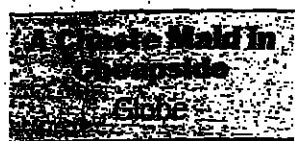
As we enter the Globe, black-clad Jacobean officials are hanging placards on the wooden pillars and delivering grim warnings to the groundlings. News of the prison awaits anybody guilty of "any or all traffic in animal flesh, until this solemn season of Lent shall be at an end".

Ho hum. This is Thomas Middleton's *Cheapside*, circa 1613. These municipal guardians are clearly going to eat or sell the meat they confiscate during the evening. In any case, another trade in animal flesh proceeds unchecked. A *Chaste Maid in Cheapside* must be one of the lewdest plays in the language for it shrewdly evokes a sex-frenzied London whose only missing element seems to be straight-forward congress between man and wife.

Two of the interlocking plots amusingly parallel each other. John McEnery's withered, wintry Sir Oliver Kix gets the child he wants by enlisting the help of Steven Skybell's Touchwood, not knowing that the fertility drug this fake shaman gives to his wife is extramarital sex. Meanwhile, Rory Edwards's Sir Walter Whorehound manages to sire half a dozen children on Elizabeth Meadows Rouse's blowy Mrs Allwit. The difference is that her husband, Mark Rylance's Allwit, knows and encourages the affair. How better can a man get an easy living than by pimping for his wife?

With Matthew Scurlfield's sly Yellowhammer forcing his daughter to make a gainful marriage to Whorehound, and one of Whorehound's "nieces" seeking to entrap Yellowhammer's dim son by pretending she is the wealthy owner of 19 Welsh mountains, lechery and greed are all around.

The intermittent appearance of prurient gossips and



lady Puritans reinforces the feeling that hypocrisy is an equally popular commodity in Cheapside. Yet Malcolm McKay, who directs, fails to prove that Middleton is the "angry, passionate writer" he invokes in his programme note. On the contrary, he shuns scathing humour for sprightly comedy and, occasionally, farce.

Myself, I cannot regret the inconsistency, because Middleton's cynicism strikes me as more accepting and good-natured than critical and fierce. Even the villainous Whorehound cannot be taken too seriously, certainly not in this production, where he comes with a Mephistophelean beard and a punk-like spike of hair rising from his forehead, giving him the look of a depraved unicorn. McKay even provides a silent-movie chase, in which Yellowhammer's daughter escapes to her true love by shinning up a rope ladder to the top balcony — and why not?

There is plenty of cheerful cross-dressing as the Cheapside citizenry swirls about, but no set and barely a prop to be seen. It works well. With the excellent *Maid's Tragedy* also in the rep, the Globe's first season is ending on a high; and it is nice to report that its artistic director continues to be central to its success. Rylance's paunchy Allwit, complacently munching his muffins while he comically recommends the merits of cuckoldom, is a wonderful creation, not to be missed by anyone who values wry, deft comedy.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

All that jazz

RADIO

The standard broadcasting response to celebrity death is that someone, usually in television, gets out some footage of their last appearance and arm-twists the schedulers into giving it a slot, sooner. The result is a tiny, irrelevant slice of the person's art. Happily BBC Radio decided that Ronnie Scott, who died just before Christmas last year, deserved a proper tribute, properly made. Thus it was not until this week that *The Club That Scott Built* (Monday, Radio 2) made the airwaves.

The documentary, presented by Miles Kingston, hit every button. It had a knowledgeable but unobtrusive presenter, it had the right balance between words and music, it lauded Scott's importance without being pompous, and it had a wealth of colourful stories.

The importance of Scott and his partner Pete King cannot be overstated. Without the club they opened in 1959 at 39 Gerrard Street it is very likely that London would never have heard some of the greats of jazz. It took a couple of musicians to be willing to risk so much. No businessman, certainly not then, would have taken the chance. Benny Green recalled that he first heard Scott talk about opening a

club after Scott's quintet had finished a Monday night gig in Acton Town Hall, from which the band profits were £13. Eventually the Gerrard Street basement was found (superseded later by the present, Bashier Frith Street premises).

In the heady days, of the 1960s John Dankworth remembered going to Gerrard Street with his wife Cleo Laine to hear Annie Ross sing. Also in the audience were Tony Bennett, Mel Tormé and Marian Montgomery. By the end of the night, Ross, Bennett, Montgomery and Laine were on stage singing *On the Sunny Side of the Street* with Tormé playing drums.

Not everyone approved of this music. Above the club there was a garment factory and when Scott allowed an American singer and her accompanist to rehearse one afternoon, the factory owner sued because of the noise. The judge threw out the case, saying plenty of people would have paid £25 to hear such music: the singer was Ella Fitzgerald, her accompanist Oscar Peterson. Thanks Judge. Thanks Ronnie.

PETER BARNARD

JOHN CUSACK MINNIE DRIVER ALAN ARKIN DAN AYKROYD

"MISS THIS AND NEVER HOLD YOUR HEAD HIGH IN A CINEMA AGAIN." — *Sobit*

"A SPARKLING COMEDY... the script is littered with crackling one-liners." — *The Independent*

"The bloodsplattered black comedy thriller of the year. No contest."

STANK

NOW SHOWING AT SELECTED CINEMAS



No sex please, we're married: Elizabeth Meadows Rouse as the blowy Mrs Allwit with Mark Rylance as her happily cuckolded husband in Thomas Middleton's sprightly comedy

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL: A thrilling piece of theatre with music, and an absorbing evening of musical eccentricity

Seeing doubles in the bar

Unlike some visiting companies that arrive here with a pantechon of furniture, and possibly half a cherry orchard, the Scottish-based Suspect Culture travels light. Two glass panels that rotate on a central pivot, two bar tables and four bar stools. Oh, and a string quartet.

The four instrumentalists are arranged as two couples, one either side of the stage. Likewise, the four actors are kept separate. They are friends, meeting at a bar, sitting around one table, but the table is shown twice and the friends dart or glide from one to the other when intimate confidences are to be shared. The idea may sound daft on the page but it generates sequences of rhythmic beauty and emotional emphasis that represent the to and fro of conversation in a thrillingly theatrical manner.

Time flies when it's embellished

SCO/Mackerras Usher Hall

THERE have been more eccentricities in Edinburgh Festival music this year than ever before. At least one of them, Peter Hurford's series of 15 early-evening recitals of Bach organ music in Greyfriars Kirk, was nothing short of an inspiration. Another, the four-hour recital of the nine Prokofiev sonatas and two sonatas by Alexander Toradze's piano students, was not far short of a disaster. And the value of András Schiff's late-night recitals of Bach Preludes and Fugues was seriously reduced by the official predilection for gloom, which left the Usher Hall audience in the dark as to exactly where they were in the programme.

However, although conductors and soloists have been eccentrically matched to the repertoire, they cannot go

wrong with Sir Charles Mackerras. His concert performances of operas, usually with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, have so endeared him to the Edinburgh audience over the past few years that he can now pull off tricks which few other conductors would even contemplate. His three-and-a-half-hour programme of three Mozart symphonies and two piano concertos with Alfred Brendel and the SCO seemed not a moment too long.

Even more remarkable, a late-night event with the SCO billed as "the Art of Embellishment, a lecture concert" not only attracted a good audience but also kept it amused as Mackerras held forth on what is, or can be, a dauntingly academic subject.

Actually, Mackerras is so disarming that he could have been more academic than he was. We would quite happily have listened to the occasional line or two with the embellishments explained in detail. But we were no less happy listening to whole arias, expertly sung as they were by Nuccia Fregola and Inger Dam-Jensen. There were items from the publications of the 18th-century Edinburgh immigrant from Rome, Domenico Corri, who was represented by his embellished arrangements of both classical arias and Scottish songs (the latter idiomatically sung by Mhairi Lawson). Better still, there were Mozart's embellishments for J.C. Bach's *Cara, la dolce fiamma* and for his own *Non so d'onde viene*, K 294, as so lovingly and so sensationally written out in different versions for Aloysia Weber.

GERALD LARNER

Timeless Gateway

agitated, melancholy or tall too briefly) serene. Treading through the play is the history of a photograph of Stella (Molly Innes). She is now holding down some well-paid, boring job but once she

was photographed mostly naked except for some Cleopatra accessories. Years have passed before Ian (Keith Macpherson), a depressed non-achiever, sees it in a mag and describes it to Paul Hickey's Martin. Now a carefully unfeeling businessman, Martin shows it to Kate Dickie's lively but still nervy Veronica, who describes it to Stella. All four at

one time hold the photo, at one or other of the tables, and its history illuminates the lives it touches.

The gestures, vocal tones and glances, the doubled movements and echoed speeches go to make an absorbing and mind-opening evening. Only at the end are all four sitting around the same table — but the string quartet knows better, and its members have retreated to the farthest corners of the stage.

JEREMY KINGSTON

A bad back won't stop a good man

The really interesting story about the irrepressible lads of Bentley Rhythm Ace is the gruesome accident that you don't get to see on their promotional video

It is rather disconcerting, talking to someone who has a broken back. It is a little like chatting with someone who has been mauled by tigers, or whose head has recently fallen off.

"Oh, that happened to me," Mike Bentley cheerfully puts in. "Head fell off. Back on again now. But a terrible business."

Richard Bentley, the man with the broken back, gets up from his chair very carefully and makes a cup of tea. Richard literally broke his back for rock'n'roll. Bentley Rhythm Ace's new single, *Bentley's Gonna Sort You Out!*, was such an obvious hit from the day of its conception that a beeper video was clearly in order. The result can be seen on *The Chart Show* practically every week: a day in the life of the flares-wearing, psychedelic-cars Bentley's, starting with a game of Swing-Ball, and ending with them getting out of an aeroplane.

Everything runs in smooth, jaunty Backwards-O-Vision, so that, at one point, the Bentleys appear to jump 30,000ft vertically up into the air, back into an aeroplane, while carefully folding up their parachutes on the way. The one astonishing thing that the video doesn't show you, however, is the moment when Richard broke his back. It happened when a freak gust of wind blew him sideways and caused him to land on his head.

"We thought about keeping it in," Richard says, putting mugs of tea carefully on the floor. "Like in that film, *The Crow*, where that bloke is killed doing a stunt and they kept it in the finished film as a tribute."

"But it didn't look that dramatic. It's just a man landing on his head and saying 'Ow' a bit in a Birmingham accent. Actually I never even knew that I had

broken my back. I went to hospital and they first said I had bruised it, and sent me home.

"A couple of hours later, I got a phone call, and they told me I had broken my back, but that it was the kind of broken back that gets better," Richard lights a cigarette, rolling his eyes. "So I have spent some time in a wheelchair and that experience makes you realise how wheelchair unfriendly the whole world is."

"Backstage at the Reading Festival last week I discovered that the toilets are up a couple of steps, so in a wheelchair you can't even go to the loo. Luckily, I can just get up and walk if I have to, but if you were like that permanently



CAITLIN MORAN

Richard lets out a sigh of disgust.

"Still, there have been good points to it: playing gigs where I come on in a wheelchair, and then stand up screaming 'the power of Bentley's has cured me! I walk again!' And wheelchair races are fab. On the first day that I got my wheelchair I spent half an hour doing handbrake turns and wheelies."

"Every cloud has a lining of solid gold, my people, solid gold! Here, have a look at this. I bought it in Singapore. This is a measure of how wealthy I am."

Richard brings out a grapefruit-sized set of disco lights, which he proceeds to switch on in the corner of the room. Mike immediately starts danc-

ing in the silence. "I feel like a king when I look at that," Richard beams. "It's a sizeable portion of my wealth, and it stokes."

"It cost him £5," Mike quietly whispers, while bopping away.

Bentley Rhythm Ace are fond of lies. Not the bad, sticky lies that make you feel uncomfortable as soon as they are spoken; but friendly lies. Lies that are really just conjecture about how cool it would have been if things had happened that way.

For instance, various members have Musical Histories: their keyboard player, James, is the former singer of EMP; and Richard used to be a member of the Midlands heroes Pop Will Eat Itself; whereas Mike was a Tarmac-layer. "From Hollywood," he asserts. "It's a village ten miles outside Birmingham." When asked how they all met, Richard and Mike immediately get to work concocting a tale of what would have been a cool way to meet.

There's a stall in Birmingham market that sells second-hand drum machines. Mike starts, stretching into the story, "and on one very eventful day, there appeared a Bentley Rhythm Ace drumbox for £50. Although we were strangers then, both of us were drawn to this fantastic item, and we both reached out to buy it at the same time. A small fight then ensued, before we looked into each other's eyes and realised that it would be better to make music, not war."

Ah, but that's a fib. What's the real truth, from out of What Actually Happened?

"Met in the pub," Richard says mournfully.

The single, Bentley's *Gonna Sort You Out!*, is clearly going to be the last Summer Hit of 1997, before the leaves on the trees drop down dead and we all have to start thinking of Christmas. It is this year's *Da Funk* — a lazy, slightly sleazy, bubbling jaunt through big, distorting bass and needling old-school synth samples. Listening to it is a bit like watching a lava lamp on fast-forward. It is almost certainly going to leap into the Top Ten this Sunday.

"Oh, don't!" Richard moans. "Stop it!" Mike adds. "When I get all excited, I find that I can't sleep. I had almost forgotten about it."

"I'm going away this weekend," Richard declares. "I just don't want to know if it's a hit or not. I'm going camping in the Forest of Dean, and unless there are some really organised squirrels with access to the radio, who are determined to be the first to tell me, then I am not going to know anything about it until Monday."

"Is camping such a good idea, with your bad back, Rich?" Mike asks. "Oh, I'm taking my bed. You are allowed to take your bed on a camping holiday, if you are a pop star with a broken back," Richard explains. "It's a Rock Rule."



Bentley Rhythm Ace: high-flying, despite everything, with their single, Bentley's *Gonna Sort You Out!*



The classic Rumours line-up reunited. *The Dance* is a recording of a special one-off concert from earlier this year, featuring many of the bands all time classics.

Includes 'The Chain', 'Dreams', 'Rhiannon', 'I'm So Afraid', 'Tusk', 'Go Your Own Way', 'Everywhere', as well as brand new material.

Released August 25th



Boyz II Men, side by side and two by two: their wholesome, U-certificate soul will be paraded afresh on *Evolution*

Motown's saviours?

If Boyz II Men's new album fails, a once-great record label is in deep trouble. Paul Sexton reports

With a commercial track record straight out of a record company mogul's dream, Boyz II Men were always going to have plenty to live up to with their impending third album. But after recent events at their label, the beleaguered Motown Records, the Philadelphia foursome's task now makes the labours of Hercules seem like a few minor errands.

The bestselling R&B vocal group of the decade — perhaps of any decade, with career album sales of around 30 million from just two releases — return next month with a new album, *Evolution*. It is an event with an unfortunate subtext, since right in the middle of preparation for its release the once-mighty label's American president and chief executive, Andre Harrell, was handed the "Dear John" note by his employers.

Thus ended the executive's unhappy two-year reign, during which the phrase "the hit sound of Motown" sounded ever more anachronistic. A succession of Harrell signings failed to put the company back on the gold standard, while such old hands as Diana Ross and Stevie Wonder toiled in the shadow of their own past triumphs. No successor to Harrell has yet been named, and observers have struggled to think of a lower ebb in the company's history.

Into this corporate maelstrom come the group who, with apologies to such talented stablemates as Queen Latifah and Zhané, have chiefly kept the Motown flame alight in recent times. Thanks to the boardroom firing squad, after months of careful planning Boyz II Men return to duty like a poet trying to give a reading in a war zone.

Fortunately for all concerned, *Evolution* is an album of high polish. It is crammed with the heartfelt, sometimes histrionic ballads that became their metier after the success of 1992's *End of the Road* and the 1995 duet with Mariah Carey, *One Sweet Day*, two songs that between them spent 29 weeks atop the American charts.

On the other side of town from the snarl of much current hip-hop, this is U-certificate soul, wholesome to a fault. These boys are not only good to their mothers, they even sing about them, on the Baby-face-honed *Mama*. But with production and writing credits for several of the current cosa nostra of urban beat, such as Keith Crouch and the ubiqui-

tous Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs, the album also contains sophisticated swing pieces, among them a persuasively funky track called *Can't Let Her Go*.

The group retain a humble excitement about returning to the fray, while wistfully remembering the days when it was all rather less complicated. "When we released the first album," says Shavar, Stockman of 1991's *Coolerhigh-harmony*, "the R&B singing group wasn't prominent, so the record label was open to anything. They didn't know what direction to go in anyway. They just let us do our thing. So we released it, and it blew up. Everyone was surprised by the success." *Coolerhigh-harmony* sold nine million copies in America alone.

"After that came a resurgence of a lot of other groups," says Stockman, "so the pressure got a little deeper. When our second album did what it did [an even more boggling 12 million Stateside], the pressure grew even greater."

But none of that ever-heightening expectation has stopped them savouring the careers they used to dream of at their own "Fame" academy, Philadelphia's High School of Creative and Performing Arts. It was there that Boyz II Men were founded in 1988. The new album contains an affectionate nod to those salad days with a fine cappella version of *Can You Stand The Rain*, the song which helped to secure their record deal after they adopted it as a latter-day, street-corner harmony foursome.

"It's pretty much the song that changed our lives," says Stockman. "With every album, we want to do at least one a cappella song, even just for our satisfaction, to know we've still got the pipes."

Stockman and fellow member Wanya Morris admit their debt to R&B's old-school groups, several of whom are still thriving and, in turn, are happy to be passing the torch to a group which shares their entertainment values. "Pioneers back then helped groups like us do what we do," says Stockman. "I like to watch older groups perform. They've been doing it so many years, they go by the book, they do all the right things on stage."

want people to know we do other things, and this is a very well-rounded album. We get on stage and we do dance, and we do have fun. We're not just laidback, singing cry-babies."

But in one detail, at least, Boyz II Men are old-fashioned young men. Working at a rudderless Motown, they cannot help but ponder how much sweeter it would have been in the creative alliance of the great days of Tamla, when every soul fan was on first-name terms with Berry, Stevie, Marvin, Smokey et al.

"It would feel good to have not only a successful album, but a successful company that has mega-hits," says Morris, and Stockman adds: "If it was that way, it would alleviate a lot of stress from everyone. The tension is thick. You can see the beads of sweat on everybody's face."

● The single *4 Seasons of Loneliness* is released on Motown on Sept 8, and the album *Evolution* on Sept 22

Genius reborn on the bridge

SONNY ROLLINS

The Complete RCA Victor Recordings

(RCA 09026-08075-2)

AFTER his famous self-imposed break in the late 1950s, the saxophonist Sonny Rollins returned to recording in 1962 with one of his most enduringly popular albums, *The Bridge*, named after the location where he practised during his time off. Guitarist Jim Hall was his partner, and their rapport during Rollins's typically robust exploration of standards and the odd original sets the tone for this six-CD set.

The discs cover only two years, but the stylistic variety — from sinewy calypsos, through overt modernism in the company of the trumpeter Don Cherry and drummer Billy Higgins, to an

JAZZ ALBUMS

Intriguing collaboration with Coleman Hawkins firmly establishes Rollins as one of the most fluently imaginative of improvisers.

DAVE DOUGLAS

Sanctuary

(Avant AVAN 066)

RECORDED over two

August 1996 nights at

New York's premier cut-

ting-edge jazz venue, the

Knitting Factory, this

two-CD set features the

trumpeter Dave Douglas

leading a stellar octet

through two hours of

fiercely committed music,

an exhilarating mix of

exuberant freedom and

tight but virtuosic disci-

pline. Douglas's liner-

note nods to figures such

as Coltrane, Coleman,

Boulez and Schoenberg,

but it is to a non-musical

source — the Florentine

dome-building achieve-

ment of Brunelleschi,

with its celebrated mix-

ture of improvisational

daring and technical ge-

nius — that the trumpeter

traces his inspiration.

HENRI TEXIER

Respect

(Label Bleu LBLC 6612

HM 83)

THE title was inspired by

the feelings of French

bassist Henri Texier for

his collaborators: the

valve trombonist Bob

Brookmeyer, alto player

Lee Konitz, electric bass-

ist Steve Swallow and

drummer Paul Motian.

Each band member con-

tributes two composi-

tions, so the ground

covered ranges from

Motian's subtle semi-ab-

straction to Brookmeyer's

gently propulsive

straight-ahead tuneless-

ness. But the band never-

theless manages to assert

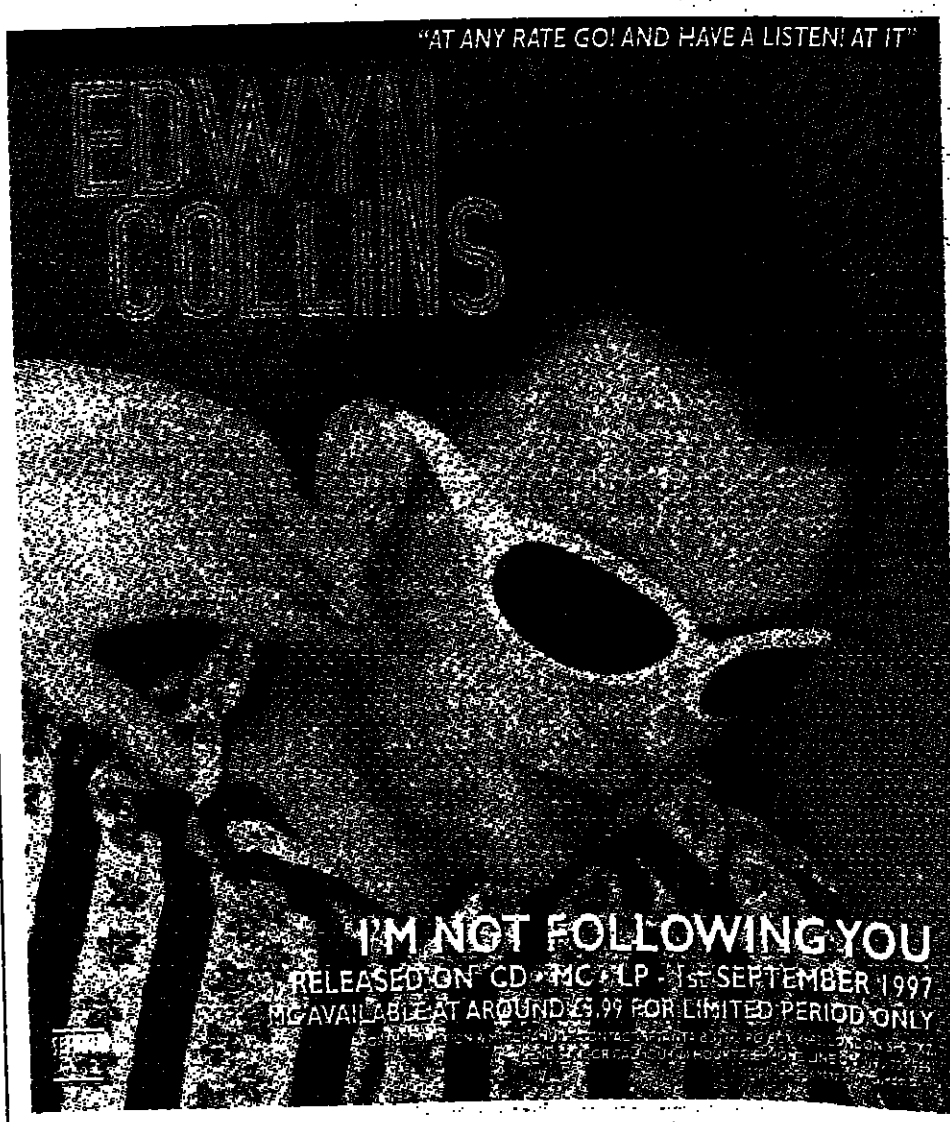
its individuality — a

highly attractive brand of

elegant, understated vir-

tuosity — in all it plays.

CHRIS PARKER



"AT ANY RATE GO! AND HAVE A LISTEN! AT IT!"

EDWYN COLLINS

I'M NOT FOLLOWING YOU

RELEASED ON CD, MC, LP 1st SEPTEMBER 1997

MC AVAILABLE AT AROUND £5.99 FOR LIMITED PERIOD ONLY

Never saw a
comeback like
this before

NEW POP ALBUMS: The continuing resurgence of Edwyn Collins gives **Alan Jackson** a nice warm glow

EDWYN COLLINS
I'm Not Following You
(Setanta SET CD 039 £12.99)

(Santalita SET CD 039 112-99)
The return of Edwyn Collins two years ago, with his irresistible single *A Girl Like You*, represented one of recent pop's most welcome Lazarus acts. And, on the evidence of this exceptionally spirited, diverse and winning LP, the one-time Orange Juice man has been further invigorated by his success.

His fourth solo album, *I'm Not Following You*, is mouthy, opinionated, super-confident and often either funny, pointed or both. It also represents a veritable jukebox of musical influences, some paraded nakedly, others hampered into submission, subverted and reshaped into some new Collins rantant.

There are potential singles a-go-go, and enough pot shots taken at sacred cows (*Keep On Burning* and *Adidas World* among them) to upset not only Angry of Tunbridge Wells but also Supercal of Notting Hill Gate. All in all, it's a bit of a triumph, and a lot of fun to boot. He's lost his quiff but regained his edge, and the results are here for everyone to enjoy.

SHOLA AMA
Much Love
(WEA 3984 200202 £13.99)
FAMOUSLY discovered while improvising on a Flannery-Smith Tube station platform by Kwame, a member of D-

Influence, the 18-year-old Shola Ama scored a major hit earlier this summer with her version of the Randy Crawford success, *You Might Need Somebody*.

Cruel though it may be to say so, thanks was due largely to the enduring appeal of that song, and its neatly updated arrangement: the young vocalist is as yet no great shakes as an interpreter, and her version lacked the verve and jazz-informed authority which made Crawford's original the best.

Happily, as this debut album shows, Anna sounds much more at home amid those more loose-limbed if formulaic soul-grooves she has penned herself in collaboration with various other writers. There is a pleasingly cohesive mood to the 11 new tracks here, despite their relative lyrical anonymity. Time and experience are what she needs to build on her undoubted potential.

GENESIS
Calling all Stations
(Virgin GENCD 6 £14.49)
IN WHICH Ray Wilson, formerly frontman with No 1 hit wingers Sultskin, replaces a departed Phil Collins to become the third vocalist in Genesis's 15-studio-album history.

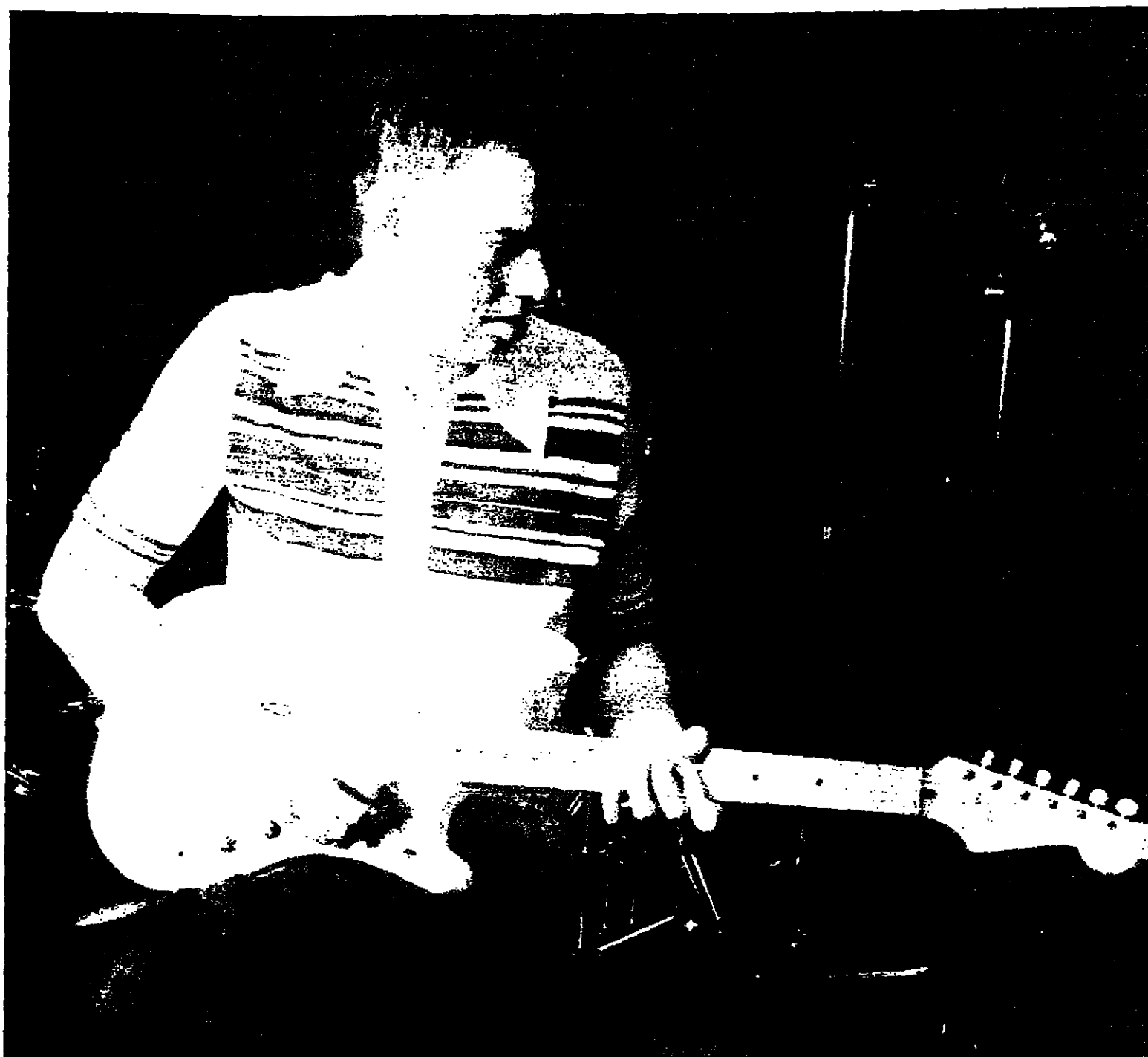
And a good enough job he makes of it too: his voice sounds uncannily familiar from the outset, being effect-

ively an amalgam of various other pop-rock chestbeaters of the 1970s and 1980s.

His ball and chain, though, is the jaw-droppingly joyless selection of material handed to him by surviving members Mike Rutherford and Tony Banks. The title track gets the show off to an efficiently portentous start, but things rapidly head downhill into either banality or bombast. Four tracks, each in dire need of editing, clock in at more than seven minutes; others are more compact, but are hobbled by clichéd lyrics and a relentlessly downbeat tone.

The cumulative effect, given the production's expensive but oddly dated feel, is that *Calling all Stations* sounds like Toto in a depression — hardly a happening 1997 vibe.

RICKIE LEE JONES
Ghysphered
(Reprise 9362-46557-2 £15.49)
LIKE fellow American Suzanne Vega, Jones has consistently subverted expectations of how a singer-songwriter should behave, let alone a woman with an acoustic guitar. Although her distinctively drawled vocals can give a mistaken impression of laziness and self-indulgence, she is one of her genre's most progressive exponents, here incorporating trip-hoppy, techno beats and all manner of squeaky-squawky electronic noises into her familiar folk-jazz musings.



Edwyn Collins's *I'm Not Following You* is a veritable jukebox of musical influences, some paraded nakedly, others hammered into submission.

Co-producing the album herself with Rick Boston, she instantly establishes the blissed-out, meandering mood with *Little Yellow Town*, and goes on to offer some typically idiosyncratic and above aver-

The relative sameness of tone and pace may cause non-devotees to fall before the final fence, but this lyrically and sonically ambitious set — her first studio release in four years — more than deserves the attention of established fans.

SOUL II SOUL
Time for Change
(Island BRCD 264 £13.99)
IT IS now eight years since *Keep on Moving* provided Jazzie B's musical collective with its first Top Ten hit, and threatened to usher in a fresh

and exciting era of British soul. That track's enduring appeal is underlined each time Nicole taunts Papa in the television ads to which it is a soundtrack, but there is little other evidence of the brave

new world it threatened America took its ball back, moving black music into aggressive new territories that perhaps sadly, leave the melo- low grooves and inspirational messages of this latest album

There is no question that it is sure-footed and distinctive and boasts excellent vocals from a variety of artists, particularly Ray Simpson last, though whether it was wise to *kick off with a lengthy* but undistinguished instrumental is open to debate. But that it will alter Soul II Soul's now rather marginalised status seems unlikely.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | (-) Be Here Now | Oasis (Creation) |
| 2 | (1) White on Blonde | Texas (Mercury) |
| 3 | (2) The End of the Land | Prodigy (XL Recordings) |
| 4 | (3) Computer Control | Radiohead (Parlophone) |
| 5 | (4) Always on My Mind | Elvis Presley (RCA) |
| 6 | (8) Love Is For Ever | Billy Ocean (Jive) |
| 7 | (-) Mouth to Mouth | Levelleins (China) |
| 8 | (3) Backstreet's Back | Backstreet Boys (Jive) |
| 9 | (6) Blurring the Edges | Meredith Brooks (Capitol) |
| 10 | (7) Spice | Spice Girls (Virgin) |

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Figure 7: tracklets denotes last week's position

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

Wail with the original Nashville cats

NOWADAYS, Nashville may be synonymous with cowboy hats and country music, but back in the Fifties it played to a different beat — the rick-o and sax-led boogies found on *Wall Daddy!* Nashville *Jump Blues* (Ace CDCHD 653). Dozens of now largely forgotten black acts recorded for the local Excllo label, including a hymn of praise to General Eisenhower on *Drive Soldier Drive* by Little Maxie Bailey, and the raucous *Chicken Hearted Woman* by Clarence Samuels, featuring the great, and sadly late, Johnny Copeland on guitar.

Over in Britain, the blues boom of the early 1960s was nurtured by more mainstream influences as the tribute album to one of the movement's

BLUES ALBUMS

pioneers, Cyril Davies, shows ***Knights of the Blues Table*** (Viceroy, 54189-2) includes a host of those early names including Georgie Fame, Paul Jones, Peter Green and, helping out on harmonica as brother Chris sings, one Mick Jagger. It's a worthy memorial to a great name.

Chicago was a big influence on Davies and it is Little Mack Simmons, a survivor from the Windy City's golden days, who impresses on Little Mack is **Back** (Electra-Fi 3355, distributed by Red Lick, 01766 512151). He tackles a clutch of self-composed numbers and classics such as Eddie Boyd's *Five Long Years*.

It is Memphis rather than Chicago which holds sway over the Walter Trout Band's new album, **Positively Beale Street** (Provogue PRD 71042). Guitarist Trout has had his ups and downs since he left John Mayall in 1989, but he seems to be on an up now with a release which mixes hard rockers with slower tracks such as the Dave Williams-penned *Let Me Be The One*. For prewar fans, the release of the month must be the reissue on one CD of the two volumes of *Blue Guitars*, the classic 1920s tracks by Eddie Lang and Lonnie Johnson that were first collected onto vinyl in the 1960s (Beat Goes On

BGOCD32). Jazz guitarist Lang and blues pioneer Johnson provided the perfect partnership, aided on various occasions by Louis Armstrong, King Oliver and the great grooves of Texas Alexander. You couldn't really call Mickey Lee Lane a blues artist, even though he covers Little Richard's *Tutti Frutti* on *Rockin On . . . And Beyond* (Rollercoaster RCD 3014). A retrospective of a 40-year career in the music business. The son of a cantor, he achieved fleeting success with the dance craze disc *Shaggy Dog* in the early 1960s. But you can't help but be captivated by a life story spent on the fringes of pop stardom.

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Blair can't let Labour become a stupid party

The Government ignores ideas, say intellectuals. John Lloyd disagrees

Modern Prime Ministers have seemed to require intellectuals about them. Harold Wilson leant on the academic economists Lords Balogh and Kaldor, and had two — Anthony Crosland and Richard Crossman — in his Cabinets at different times. James Callaghan made use of the talents of his son-in-law, the economic commentator Peter Jay, to give intellectual support to his espousal of what came to be known as monetarism.

Margaret Thatcher blew away the belief in smart society that the Tories were stupid by surrounding herself with intellectuals — the economists Patrick Minford, Alan Walters and Ralph Harris; the historians Hugh Thomas and Norman Stone; the journalists Ferdinand Mount and John O'Sullivan. Even John Major, who had seemed to have little taste for free-ranging discussion, would prevail on the historian Martin Gilbert to drop by, or come with him on foreign trips.

New Labour should have been — said it was going to be — the fusion of politics with intellectual life. Tony Blair, in Opposition, had conversations with every kind of anti-Tory intellectual — the sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf from the Liberal Democrats; the political scientist David Marquand of the Social Democrat tradition; "old" Labourites such as John Ewart who had advised Neil Kinnock on economic matters; and Raymond Plant who had thought deeply on the construction: the historian Eric Hobsbawm and the writer Martin Jacques from the eurocommunist strand round the seminal *Marxism Today*; all were there, waiting to be consulted.

Blair's circle put out many more feelers to the intelligentsia than any leader had done before. Indeed, it set up a structure to organise intellectuals into a new Labourist relationship. It was called Nexus, run by Neal Lawson, who then worked for the Tory adman and raconteur Tim Bell. Nexus had some real stars in its firmament, such as the philosopher John Gray, who had been a Thatcherite, and Anthony Giddens, who had been a Marxist, but who — by the time I saw them both in action at a Nexus seminar in Oxford last summer — had crossed-dressed, with Gray to the "left" of Giddens.

But now it seems the bridge to the brainy has been thrown too far, and there is a retreat. The historian Ben Pimlott, biographer of Harold Wilson and the Queen, wrote in last week's *Sunday Times* that "there has never been a time when the Labour Party has been less interested in ideas". Fintan O'Toole, the *Irish Times* columnist, confirmed Pimlott's view by observing (in the course of a piece on the fall of Charles Haughey) that ideology had been "translated by Tony Blair into its pejorative synonym, dogma" and that Labour now lacked "a serious conflict of ideas".

This is profoundly wrong. It is a misperception based on a view of lively, intellectual politics as needing a clash between established lefts and rights — and that clearly no longer happens, either between Labour and the main opposition parties or, in the old way, within the party itself. It is bolstered by a summer in which the news was made by personality clashes and set

against the background of a party leadership more than usually concerned to give an image of a monolithic unity which suppresses debate — whether on the constitution, drugs or tax.

But this is an intellectual party, which is not to say — and in some senses is the opposite of saying — that it is an intellectuals' party. Its senior figures do their own thinking, and pick and mix from a range of personalities and policy ideas without — as yet — being too much beholden to any. Blair, Peter Mandelson, Robin Cook, and especially Gordon Brown have had plenty of time to work out the broad lines of what they think, and wish no one to do for them. Above all, they do not wish to be confined to the ranks of the "left-wing" intelligentsia: they often prefer the right-wing kind.

There is much more to this than personal taste and habit. The nature of the new Labour project enforces intellectual daring — or it will fail. That is because the Government has set up a series of contradictions which can only be resolved through new thinking, underpinning new approaches.

In education, Labour wants to marry discipline and academic rigour with the comprehensive ideal of putting all abilities through one school and giving all the maximum chance of success. In the area of law and order, it wants to combine severity on criminality of all kinds with liberalism in the area of gay rights. It wants to end social exclusion but is uncertain of how much coercion it will have to use to ensure that all who can work up 13,000ft above sea level. There it has embarked on the furthest-reaching devolution of power from the centre of any government since the 1920s — and wants to secure the Kingdom as a United one. It wants to become more successful in being a trading nation than at any stage in its postwar past — and demands that standards of ethics be raised in the sale of arms, one of the country's biggest exports.

Impossible? Yes, of course: but the exciting part is how much of an impossible series of ambitions proves to be possible: how far, that is, new Labour can remould Britain in something of its image. It may collapse in cynicism, leaving a Government conducting a series of modulations on late Thatcherism. There are many who think so: indeed, both Pimlott and O'Toole presage that, in saying new Labour is empty of ideas.

But I do not think it can collapse. The Cabinet has men and women who are more powerfully ambitious and egocentric than most — driven by politics, by achievement and the desire for success. Their nightmare is failure.

Beyond the personal lies the need for ideas, concepts, proposals and wheezes to bring the contradictions in Labour's policies closer together, and in so doing to hammer out a new shape to policy and its implementation. Labour may aspire to blandness; the glimpse into its private life shows monsters of vanity clashing in the jungle clearing. But they cannot help it: they have to be clever, or give up.

The author is associate editor of the New Statesman

Ann Taylor, who chairs the Cabinet's drugs committee, insists that the narcotics war is not lost

Why this Government won't legalise drugs

It is always difficult for any discussion on drugs to be conducted in a calm and rational way and when it is precipitated by the tragic shooting of a five-year-old boy it is not surprising that some of the analysis is somewhat blurred.

As chair of the Cabinet sub-committee on drugs misuse, I welcome any debate about how society should deal with the problems of drugs, but I am concerned at some of the misconceptions that have entered into parts of the debate in recent days. For example, some drug users take drugs in what they believe is a controlled recreational way, which leads some people to say: "You won't beat drugs, so learn to live with them." Too many parents of youngsters for whom this approach has gone wrong can testify to the dangers of turning a blind eye.

The recent debate has focused on two related issues. First, is the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act still a reasonable basis for our approach? And second: should we be tough on or sympathetic to those who use drugs?

The fact that the Police Foundation has established a new inquiry has raised the issue of reviewing the 1971 Act. However, there is already an independent and highly respected expert body — the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs — which regularly reviews drugs laws and reports to government on key issues. At no stage has it ever recommended

wholesale revision of the 1971 Act. I firmly believe we already know enough to start to contain and then reduce the damage caused by drugs. There is good reason for this. The logic of the legalisation argument is flawed. The increase in drug misuse over the past 25 years does not justify abandoning any law which tries to control drugs. International conventions underpin the drugs controlled by the 1971 Act — reflecting worldwide concerns about drug misuse.

The Government is not on a moral trip in controlling drugs such as heroin and cocaine: most people are well aware of their extremely dangerous physical and psychological effects. Those who argue that cannabis and Ecstasy are no more dangerous than alcohol or tobacco are discounting the growing evidence about their short and long-term health risks. And the consequences of drug misuse do not anyway just affect the person who chooses to take them. Whatever the legal framework, the demand for drugs would still fuel demand for money to generate substantial crime.

It is not good enough to say "the drugs war is lost". Tough enforcement does have an impact on the availability of drugs and the demand among young people. But being tough in enforcing the law is by no means incompatible with supporting addicts or educating our young people to make informed judgments. Let us be clear about what is going on in the real world.

Half of the population under the age of 30 has used or is using illegal drugs," wrote Simon Jenkins on this page two days ago. Correct. But this distinguishes regular bouts of drug-taking among vast numbers of young people. Not so. Next month's British Crime Survey results for 1996 — the most authoritative assessment of drug trends — highlight the fact that, while half of our young people do not and will not take illegal drugs, most of those who have will only ever try them once or twice.

So let us not patronise young people, and assume that they are all "mad for it". Many young people are already quite clear that their lives are

root causes of long-term drug misuse — particularly unemployment and deprivation — not least through the Welfare to Work initiative.

But more is clearly needed. That is why the Prime Minister will soon be appointing a Drug Tsar — the UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator — who will report directly to him. Working across Government and with agencies and communities, this key figure will review what is already in place and swiftly put forward a new strategy that maximises all our resources and energies.

Look ahead ten years. Any step along the legalisation route and we can be sure that both demand for and use of drugs would massively increase — with no let-up in organised crime — along with the creation of a right counselling and treatment services are available. That is precisely why my Home Office colleagues — ludicrously stereotyped by Simon Jenkins — are pushing forward to give courts the power to make a drug testing and treatment order, designed to get drug offenders out of the crime and dependency cycle. It is desperately important that while we are tough on enforcement, we are also sympathetic and positive in the help we give to those who want to escape the drugs trap.

This Government has already taken measures to develop local Drug Action Teams across the country, to reverse threatened cuts to 300 frontline Customs staff and to attack

The author is Leader of the House of Commons

The Bolivian birthday party

By the shores of Lake Titicaca, we sat down and ate. Above us, the Andes...

Where did you spend your last birthday? Mine, my 48th, just passed, began on the tin roof of the barracks-like Hotel Ferrocaril — the Railway Hotel — in a grey dawn on the northern shore of Lake Titicaca. In the passionless and dirty town of Puno, Peru.

Not everywhere remote and strange is exotic, and the Andean Altiplano is not exotic. Freezing by night and windswept by day, this great flat waste of brown grass and thin soil, scratched at by Indians on their tiny plots of potatoes, is raised up 13,000ft above sea level. There it lies, its human and animal population gasping for oxygen, between two massive ranges of snowy mountains.

Over one lies the Amazon basin, over the other the Pacific. Caught in a saucer between them, the Altiplano presses its nose to an icy sky, redeemed only when a fierce sun burns through and the blue waters and green reeds of the vast inland sea of a lake catch fire and dissolve in a shower of sparks.

But on my birthday morning the sun never found me. Awoken by the familiar ache of an upset stomach, I woke the others at seven and promised to rejoin them at breakfast after scouting for bus times and tickets to Bolivia. By 7.15 I had established that the only bus was at 7.30 and it had eight seats left. There were six of us, Julian, Adrian, Pierre, Louis, Matt and I, and we were abroad, rucksacks on the roof, by 7.25.

The lake shore slipped by. As we passed the three great ruined Jesuit churches at Juli — their Baroque Indian stonework choked by weeds and their roofs and altars open to the birds — Matt's head banged against the window of the elderly bus. He had been sick but was recovering. Matt has only two modes: unconscious, or "Wow! Let's climb that mountain!" For him Peru and Bolivia exist only as do settings to a diamond, the precious stone being any one of the Andes' countless peaks. Our aim is to climb Illimani (21,120ft), but Matt thinks he may throw in a few other 20,000ft-plus mountains too.

Pierre gazed at one such, across the lake, as we rattled on. Pierre was dressed in his Day-Glo orange oil-rigger's boiler suit, as is his wont, and Yorkshire flat cap and snow-goggles. The outfit has been causing amazement and confusion among the Indians, who find his height and ginger hair extraordinary enough. The children love him and the girls

(to whom he is not unsuspiciously) regard him as an object of wonder. At the border with Bolivia we stopped to change money and admire the ambition if not the know-how of the aldermen of Yunguyo, who had commissioned topiary to turn some moth-eaten conifer bushes in the town square into llamas, without success. I wished Simon Jenkins were with me to witness so heart-warming a demonstration of civic pride even in a savage land.

At the frontier this time, all was quiet. Not so the last time I was here, in days when prices of staple foodstuffs were controlled in both countries. An unexpected official rise in

pasta prices by the Peruvian Government, unreciprocated in Bolivia, had resulted in a frenzy of illicit pasta shipments across all land borders between the two. Indian women were

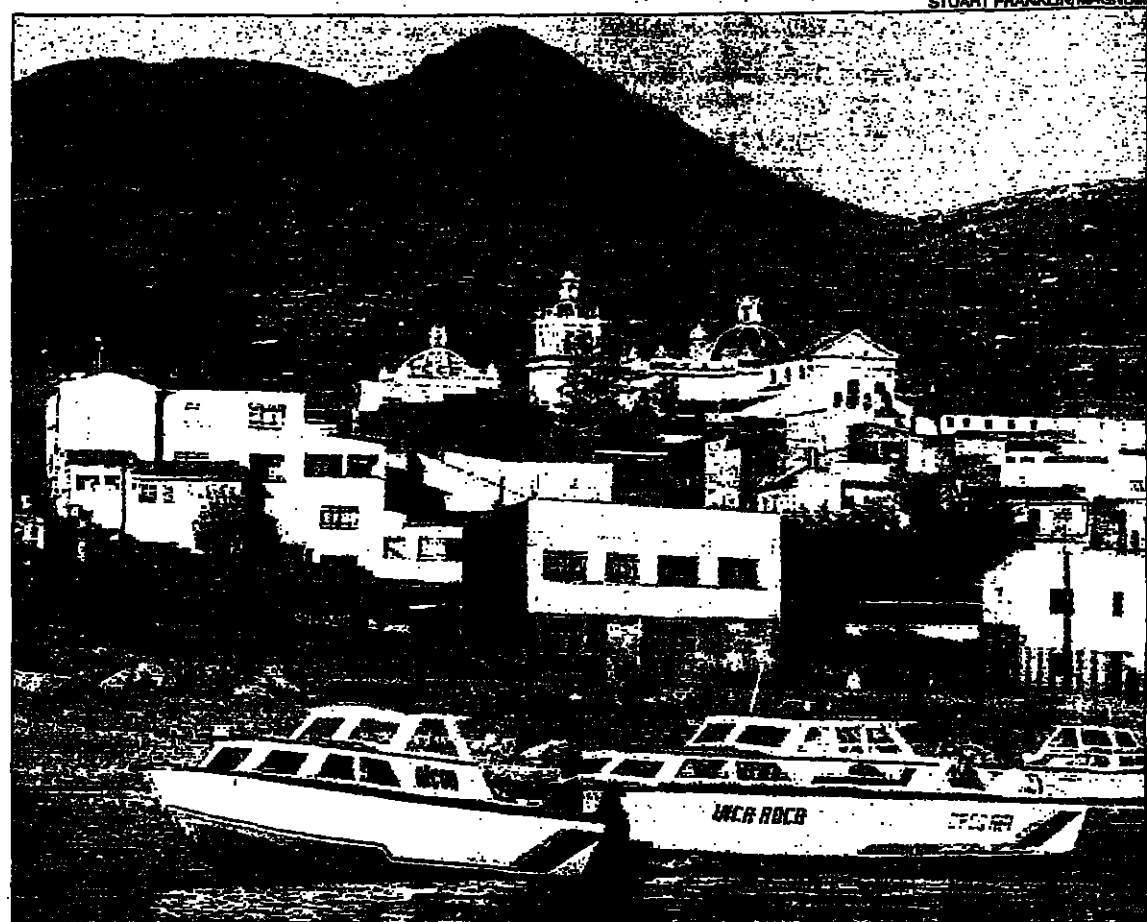
running, tripping and dragging huge sacks of the stuff from Bolivia, to sell in the square in Yunguyo, as the topiary llamas gazed down. This was the first time I had seen pasta-smuggling on any vigorous scale — but now the spaghetti pirates were out of business, sidelined by Thatcherite regimes in Peru and Bolivia, de-regulated groceries, and a global market in macaroni. I wished Anatole Kaletsky were with me to see this living exhibition of the inevitability of Adam Smith.

Being landlocked, Bolivia has only one coast, and that is the southern shores of Lake Titicaca. There is only one resort on these shores and that is Copacabana. The dusty little town is a bit of a mess, being the site of a huge cathedral encasing the sacred carving of the Virgin of Copacabana, an ill-planned struggle of boarding houses and cheap hotels, a fledgling industry of lakeside pedalo-operators, leaky-boat-hire and fried-trout vendors, and a small unit of the Bolivian Navy. The result is a confused jigsaw of Lourdes and Cleethorpes, with a dash of Portsmouth thrown in. You can climb the little hill jutting into the lake, passing the stations of the Cross and carrying, to the shrine on top, small replicas of the material blessings you crave. Stalls below sell little model Mercedes-Benzes, trucks, two-storey houses and bundles of miniature US dollar bills. My companions were unkind enough to propose buying me an Action Man doll to carry up and place there.

By the shore you can wash your lorry or bus in the Titicaca waters, anoint the screen and bumpers with paper flowers, and pay a priest to sprinkle holy water over the bonnet. This will ward off road accidents. The Catholic Church has been canny, sidling up to the Inca mysteries of Titicaca with mysteries of her own; just as the Inca priesthood, discovering that the pre-Inca civilisation they had conquered worshipped the Island of the Sun (off Copacabana), announced that here their own God, the Sun himself, had come to earth in the human form of their own ruler. Now the Virgin herself has been installed, in effigy, in the Cathedral, and the Incas' descendants queue to see her, and buy holy water.

But all to no avail. The decline of Catholic piety in the Andes is as unstoppable as the onward march of the eucalyptus tree. One introduced genus replaces another. Where is it all going? I wished I had William Rees-Mogg with me, to tell me.

We ate trout and waved a temporary goodbye to Matt and Adrian, off to scale a few preliminary peaks to keep their hand in: Adrian (Julian's much taller and slightly younger brother), affable and unassertive, in the way of slightly younger brothers; Matt bright-eyed with enthusiasm for the shops. They looked like a laborator and a barber, trotting off to find something big, and scramble up it. We four — Julian, Louis, Pierre



Copacabana, Lake Titicaca: a confused jigsaw of Lourdes and Cleethorpes, with a dash of Portsmouth

and I — were bound for the Island of the Sun. You can get there direct from Copacabana in about two hours in an outboard-motor-powered launch. But you can also walk the seven-odd miles to Yampupata at the headland, and pay a boatman to row you the half mile across to the island. We would walk to Yampupata.

But now the sun did break through. Loaded with all our belongings and 40lb rucksacks, with Julian sickening from the same short malady I was recovering from, he and I soon tired, Pierre (still in orange) and Louis bounding ahead. Even their bound shortened, however, as we began a steep climb up an ancient Inca stone path. In the afternoon glare, the lake shimmered silver beneath us.

When we rejoined it we were ready to stop. Still a mile short of Yampupata we found a tiny pink-pointed house, announcing itself to be an *hostal*. Did they have beds? Yes, said Rosemary, the young and pretty Indian girl who seemed to run the place. She was 14, she told us, adding (with a sidelong glance at Pierre) that she might marry when she was 28. She showed us into one tiny room with two mattresses made from flour sacks and covered with blankets. "Two in one," she said, "and two in the other." Reader, some

of us were straight and some of us were gay, but if you imagine there was anything even remotely erotic in this prospect, then you have no understanding of the evaporation of sexual longing under combat conditions. Rosemary made us a good meal of fried egg and rice and told us about her family, then departed.

Being my birthday we cracked open two miniature plastic bottles of Scotch and one of vodka, liberated from United Airlines. Happily the cell was undecorated (a previous room in Peru had been enlivened by a kindly landlady with a government health poster about the treatment of psoriasis and eczema, with illustrations) and as our candle guttered out (there was no electricity) I drifted to sleep as the rain began again.

The story of how for \$8 we were rowed to the Island of the Sun by Rosemary's uncle, who was 70, in a tiny boat; how the wind and waves almost defeated us in mid-straits; how I wished Libby Purves were there to advise on boating; and how Louis and Pierre saved the day in a joint-rowing tour de force... must await another day.

This one, my 48th birthday, ended as it began, half-conscious in a strange place, sleet bucketing onto a tin roof above me.

Flying again

ALMOST 15 years after they last nudged, winked and said no more, the Monty Python team is planning to re-form. Initial reticence about resurrecting the Flying Circus has been overcome and a new film is on the cards.

The five surviving Pythons —



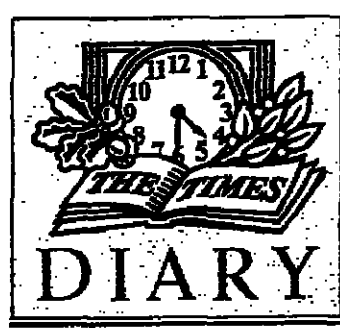
The full monty: Terry Jones

John Cleese, Michael Palin, Terry Gilliam, Terry Jones and Eric Idle — have been secretly plotting the ultimate comedy comeback. The last Python production was the film *The Meaning of Life* in 1983.

Terry Jones takes up the story: "We all met at the Cliveden hotel two or three months ago. It was the first time the five surviving Pythons had met in 15 years. We spent the afternoon tossing ideas about, stayed the night and chatted until lunch the next day. It was great being together again."

John Goldstone, the producer behind *The Life of Brian* and *The Meaning of Life*, says: "It will be another six months before it is feasible. We just need to get the team together to make it possible and we need a script."

Speculation about a new Python film was rife three years ago on the Circus's 25th birthday. But John Cleese torpedoed the idea saying: "We'd never agree on style." Perhaps now he feels it's time for something completely different.



● A corridor in the Palace of Westminster where Peter Mandelson has an office is overflowing with bags of mail for the Minister with an ever-expanding portfolio. However, word has it that when he gets back from his hole he'll be very crabby; after Labour's awful August it is by no means all fan mail.

Branching out

STILL set on swelling his family coffers, Mark Getty, son of the billionaire philanthropist John P. Getty II, is opening an art gallery in Chelsea. Since founding his picture-distribution company Getty Communications in 1993, Getty, 36,

has spent more than £18 million buying three photo-libraries including that of Edward Hulton, founder of the now defunct Picture Post magazine. The collection includes images by Man Ray, Alfred Eisenstadt and Robert Capra and will be displayed at the gallery. Prints will be a snap at £300.

Big mover

FEVERISH excitement in Faversham, Kent, where locals believe the heavyweight film star Marlon Brando is about to move into a home within waddling distance of Bob Geldof.

The star of *The Godfather* is said by residents to be buying a property and has installed himself at the Mechanic's Arms. "Mr Brando spent three hours in here one Saturday night," says the landlady, Sarah Apps.

"He had several Scotches and chatted to our regulars. I recognised him and so did several others, but nobody said anything because they did not want to make a fuss and embarrass him. He said he would be coming back. The place should be mobbed."

In a spin

LAST-minute adjustments may have to be made to the timetable of the Rolling Stones' year-long world tour so that Mick Jagger can take time off. The craggy old rocker, who was recently suggested as an ideal ambassador for Help the



"Stop now Miss McPherson, he's out like a light"

Aged, is finally living up to his responsibilities; he wants to be at the birth of his fourth child by his wife, Jerry Hall. She is expecting in December, just three months after the tour begins. "Mick is obviously very much looking forward to being with Jerry at the birth, regardless of the schedule," says a tour insider. "We might be the other side of the world by then, but I suppose he'll get his way."

Just dandy

FOR all his statesmanlike pretensions Tony Blair has proved to have more comic potential than any of his predecessors. Yesterday he became the first Prime Minister to appear in *The Beano*. Blair features in the cartoon about a young tearaway called *My Terrible* and is depicted with Cherie and Humphrey the Downing Street cat watching the young scamp playing street hockey outside No 10. Fortunately, the identity of Blair, who is believed to be the first PM to appear in the comic since it began in 1938, is made clear by the speech balloons. Caricature is clearly not the artist's strong



Comic pair: Blair and Cherie

point. "It's not a particularly good likeness," admits Euan Kerr, the editor. "But he's not an easy one to do. It just came into the scriptwriter's head to put him in. We don't have any political affiliation." Nevertheless, Downing Street is delighted. "The *Beano* doesn't come in with our regular papers," says a spokesman. "But he's very flattered."

P.H.S



TALK, OR WALK?

Ministers must help Trimble out of his dilemma

In the Northern Ireland peace process, as in European negotiations, determined Governments can wear down scepticism to make the unacceptable inevitable. The Government's decision to admit Sinn Féin to talks on Northern Ireland's future, expected in an announcement later today, is no less unsettling for being so widely advertised. It is a remarkable concession from a democratic state. Armed terrorists will be invited to shape the future of the United Kingdom without having to surrender a single bullet or dilute their revolutionary aims.

Sinn Féin's admission to talks has hinged on its "complete" cessation of violence, but nothing has been demanded of republicans to ensure that the price of entry to negotiations is the permanent abandonment of violence. The IRA has maintained a ceasefire for just short of six weeks, but that says more about its Leninist discipline than its peaceful intentions. The Government hopes Sinn Féin's entry to talks will not lead the Unionist leader David Trimble to walk out. But why should he stay?

Mr Trimble is a formidable negotiator and sincere in his desire for peace, but he would find himself in a forum without allies. The talks to which Sinn Féin have been admitted are supposed to be "all-party", but the terms of the party's entry have already ensured the walkout of the Democratic Unionists and the UK Unionists.

They not only have principled objections to negotiating with armed terrorists, they also have practical reasons for believing that republicans are dictating the direction of the peace process. Most recently, last week, the Government agreed to Sinn Féin demands for a relaxation in the conditions for republican prisoners, only days after the Irish police discovered an IRA bomb factory with sophisticated electronic equipment in a state of operational readiness.

Unionist concerns were supposed to be

addressed by the establishment of a body to oversee the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons. The handover of republican arms during talks would show a concrete commitment to peace on the part of Sinn Féin and the IRA. Yet, with less than a fortnight to go before talks start, the decommissioning body has no chairman, no agreed method of operation and no means of ensuring that terrorists hand over anything other than position papers.

Those who argue that Mr Trimble has no option but to enter this briar patch give warning that he will be cast as the intransigent party in the eyes of international and establishment opinion. But what has international and establishment opinion ever done for the Unionists? What force outside Ulster has acted as a brake on concessions to republican demands?

There is a powerful case for a principled Unionist refusal to discuss the future of this democracy with armed terrorists. There are, however, still persuasive arguments for participation. Sinn Féin's refusal to accept the principle of consent in talks will only properly be exposed by vigorous Unionist advocates. A Unionist presence at the table should make it more difficult for London and Dublin to agree a nationalist settlement in the North over the heads of the parties and then bend all their energies to selling it in a one-off referendum. In the two weeks to come Mr Trimble must weigh each argument very carefully. It may be that the wisest course is participation in proximity talks which do not require direct contact with Sinn Féin. He would not, however, be in such a difficult position if the Government had taken the right risk for peace and shown greater strength in demanding decommissioning. If the Government wants to ensure Mr Trimble's participation in talks then it must act soon to enhance Unionist confidence in the peace process.

GORE'S CHALLENGE

Principles at stake in the race to succeed Clinton

This week's revelation that the American Vice-President, Al Gore, was deeply involved in questionable fundraising for the Democratic campaign will seriously complicate his race for the White House in 2000. For Republicans, his predicament offers a new reason to pull their feuding ranks together. They should seize the chance, although for politicians who profess respect for incentives they are currently behaving as if immune to the lure of power. For President Clinton, the desire to help Mr Gore might tempt him to compromise on policies which have evolved into a coherent and achievable programme. That is a trap he should resist.

According to a Senate committee, Mr Gore made more than 80 calls to potential donors, who later gave \$3.7 million to the Democratic campaign. It is no surprise that Mr Gore played a central role in the mammoth cash-raising exercise that dominated the 1996 campaign. Nor do the calls appear illegal. But they add to the unsavoury picture which has formed in many Americans' minds of Washington politicians so desperate for cash that they will cold-call any business leader or lawyer who graces the cover of a magazine.

Images stick, as Mr Gore found earlier this year when it emerged that his visit to a Buddhist temple was a fundraising event. A charismatic, fluent politician such as Mr Clinton can dispatch such symbols but Mr Gore's persistent woodenness has left him vulnerable to bad publicity.

The contaminating effect of the fundraising scandals is one reason why Mr Gore now looks so nervous that Richard Gephardt, leader of the Democratic minority in the House of Representatives, will put up a formidable challenge for the party nomination. In an attempt to appeal to Mr

Gephardt's supporters with labour unions and the liberal wing of the party, Mr Gore has been tripping over himself to emphasise workers' rights, departing from the Administration's carefully reserved stance. He also appears to be muffling his message on the environment, one of his strongest campaign issues, because unions fear that new taxes to combat global warming could cost jobs.

To secure the Democratic nomination in 1992, Mr Clinton also tried to straddle the party's many factions; that is one reason why the policies of his first two years were so confused, even contradictory. Now, with his eyes on his place in the history books, his interests diverge from Mr Gore's.

The imminent conflict is over trade policy. When Congress resumes next week, Mr Clinton wants it to renew "fast-track authority" for trade agreements. This requires Congress to accept or reject trade bills in their entirety, without time-consuming amendments. To win Republican approval, Mr Clinton will almost certainly have to promise that provisions to safeguard the environment and labour rights will not be woven into trade bills as they were in the North American Free Trade Agreement. That concession is unlikely to suit Mr Gore, but it is one Mr Clinton should make. His commitment to open trade, reflected in ambitious international agreements, is likely to be one of his most valuable legacies.

The constraint of working with a Republican-controlled Congress has forced Mr Clinton to evolve a clear, centrist programme. He should not now abandon that. Nor should Mr Gore. He is indissolubly linked in the public mind with the Clinton Administration. He should neither deny his part in its controversies, nor squander his association with its considerable success.

DUFFERS AFLOAT

For those in folly on the sea

As an island nation, Britain has a proud lineage of swashbuckling seafarers. From the great Elizabethan mariners Hawkins and Drake to Sir Robin Knox-Johnston in the present day, Britannia has long striven to rule the waves. The Newman family, who earlier this year sank all their savings into a yacht and set off to sail around the world, belonged to this tradition. But their air-sea rescue on Wednesday by HMS *Illustrious* raises important questions about the wisdom of their actions.

It was Charles II who first introduced to England the idea of sailing as a recreation, rather than as a means of transport. Yachting has since grown into one of Britain's most popular participation sports. It is estimated that some two million people a year board a boat. But a problem arises when, no longer content with just messing about on the river, the more amateur of them decide to put out into wider waters. Certainly it takes courage to embark on such a voyage. "Oak and triple bronze encircled the heart of the man who first committed a frail boat to the cruel sea," wrote Horace. But it takes a certain folly too.

The ocean is unpredictable. Waters such as the Bay of Biscay are notoriously dangerous. Deep Atlantic swells can whip up mountainous waves in a matter of minutes. Weather forecasts are unpredictable. Having set off with a clear sky and a fair wind, a

small boat can find itself quickly floundering. And yachts are increasingly built for speed, not for endurance.

The inexperienced sailor is particularly at risk. Although the Royal Yachting Association offers courses on everything from rudimentary crewing to the toughest navigational and boat-handling skills, there are no regulations to prevent the ambitious but unqualified amateur from setting sail. If they encounter trouble, they rely on others to rescue them.

Seafarers preserve an ancient code of honour. The mayday signal of a stricken craft will always be answered — but often at enormous cost and inconvenience, not to mention risk of life. The Newman family were extremely fortunate that HMS *Illustrious*, equipped with sophisticated Sea King helicopters and an expert crew, was at hand to help them. But such provisions should never be abused. Those without extensive experience should simply not set sail. Those who do should not profit from their folly.

Air-sea rescue yachts hold high media interest. Stories are sold to the highest bidder. But any earnings by those rescued should go to maintain such valiant rescue organisations as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. And any sailor, fired by a spirit of adventure, should bear in mind the salutary telegram sent to Arthur Ransome's Swallows by their father: "Better drowned than duffers. If not duffers won't drown."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Taxpayers' input into legal costs

From Mr Gregory Stewart

Sir, In the case of *Hutber v Gabriele* (Law Report, August 19), a private prosecution for common assault, the summons against Mr Gabriele was dismissed and his solicitors applied for £23,000 costs.

Having heard representations, the magistrate allowed costs of £10,000.

I do not seek to criticise the level of fees claimed. The purpose of this letter is merely a comparative analysis of fees between City solicitors and the so-called legal-aid "fat cats". If we had represented Mr Gabriele under a legal-aid order the standard fee applicable would have been £325.50 for the entire case, with the addition of £24.75 per hour for travelling and waiting time. The likely total bill would have been about £500.

This comparison may inform the debate over the costs of a publicly funded justice system. I believe we are extremely good value at £500.

What is often missed is that most of the fees charged by City firms are paid by the public indirectly through the cost of the goods they purchase. Most clients are large companies, who simply add legal fees to the price of their product. In this case the taxpayer would have met the costs incurred by Mr Gabriele's solicitors.

I should declare an interest, in that 99 per cent of our work is legally aided criminal defence work.

Yours faithfully,

GREGORY STEWART,
Brady, Eastwood, Pierce and
Stewart (Solicitors),
Noah's Ark,
229 Deptford High Street, SE8,
August 22.

Montserrat crisis

From Mr Hugh Hanning

Sir, Your leader today does well to expose the broken-backed machinery for disaster relief inherited by the Government (see also letter, August 28).

Under the Tories, responsibility for these operations rested with a junior minister for development. This could never work because relief, unlike routine development, calls for the collaboration of at least four major departments of state, each of which outgunned the development minister. So the latter ceased to aim for "rapid response" and settled for "measured response", a tempo somewhere between large and adagio. "Rapid" was left to the charities.

The new Government creditably tried to solve the problem by putting the development minister in the Cabinet. But after two months it is clear that this may be good for development but it is no good for disaster relief.

The deadlock has been broken this week by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary — the only possible combination for getting rapid action by a group of proud departments. Because both men are extremely busy, their role should be delegated direct to a minister in the Foreign Office, equipped with the same supra-departmental authority as France's highly successful Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action.

Yours etc,

HUGH HANNING
(Chairman, Fontmell Group on Disaster Relief),
18 Montpelier Road, Blackheath, SE3,
August 27.

From Mr Philip Noakes

Sir, I have not revisited Montserrat since I was there on official business in the 1970s; but as one who spent much of my whole working life on Commonwealth and colonial affairs at home and overseas, I can, I hope, claim immunity if I say now that Mrs Short's offers seem fair and reasonable.

Yours sincerely,
PHILIP R. NOAKES,
Little St Mary, St Mary's Lane,
Uplymere, Lyme Regis, Dorset.

From Mrs Ann Curry

Sir, I am on Clare Short. The only reason this country colonised Montserrat in the first place was to make loads of cash from sugar plantations manned by slaves. This country owes the islanders a fair and well considered plan of assistance.

Yours faithfully,
ANN CURRY,
43 Julianna Road,
Wimborne Minster, Dorset,
August 25.

Home work incentives

From Mr A. Binmore

Sir, The Government should offer tax inducements for employers to introduce technology and working practices that would facilitate their employees working at home or at small local satellite offices. At a later date tax penalties could be applied to those employers who could have implemented the technology but failed to do so.

With the rapid changes in technology it may be that a huge investment now in conventional 20th-century solutions (such as public transport) could leave us with an enormous white elephant when the technology of the early 21st century has taken effect.

Yours faithfully,
A. BINMORE,
7 Dennis Willcocks Close,
Newington, nr Sittingbourne, Kent.

Privacy law would help only the rich

From Lord Wakeham, Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission

Sir, Magnus Linklater is right to point to the "nightmare" prospect ("The Princess and our privacy", August 28) of the courts being forced into conceiving piecemeal a common law of privacy which Parliament does not want established. But he is wrong on a number of other counts.

He is quite wrong to say that in its adjudication on the complaint from Mr William Zech the Press Complaints Commission said that the privacy provisions of the industry's code of practice had been broken. We actually said that because so much information had already been put into the public domain by those involved, no newspaper could be censured. I suspect any court looking at the detail under a privacy law would have had to reach the same conclusion.

This difficult case showed how elusive is the concept of "privacy" in an open society. Once information is in the public domain — in this case, for instance, put there by the surrogate mother of the baby — only a censor could take it out. That is not the sort of world we live in, or want to live in — which leads me on to a second point.

There can be no such thing as a satisfactory privacy law which the media could — or should want to — acquiesce in framing. A privacy law is a privacy law. It would be available only to the rich and, what's more, the rich with something to hide. It would do nothing to help ordinary people — the sort of people the PCC seeks to help — and would at a stroke destroy the tradition of free and investigative journalism which places, in my view, the best of the British press among the

finest in the world.

No doubt exists in my mind that self-regulation of the press, although not perfect, is working — and working increasingly effectively. I said when I took up the job of chairman of the PCC in January 1995 that the press was on trial with me as much as with Parliament.

Since then I have witnessed a steady change in attitudes. Editors do respect the code — which is, in many ways, far tougher than statute ever could be. Far more frequently than any of us could realise, they pull back from printing a story because they would be in breach of it — fearing the condemnation of their own independent watchdog, the stigma of publishing in full a critical adjudication and, ultimately, the censure of their publisher.

The best way, therefore, to protect the privacy of ordinary people is and will remain through self-regulation. Under statute, editors could — I have no doubt — take a chance on the fact that few people would have the money to pursue them in the courts. They do not have that assurance with the PCC, which is why they pull back far more often than they are ever given credit for.

In short, what problem there still is with intrusion could become worse — not better — if there was a privacy law which would inevitably supplant the jurisdiction of the PCC. Mr Linklater seems to want just to throw out the baby with the bathwater, but the entire bath as well.

Yours etc,
WAKEHAM, Chairman,
Press Complaints Commission,
1 Salisbury Square, EC4,
August 28.

Poor prognosis for doctors' training

From Dr T. R. S. Bailey

Sir, The call by Dr John Wales (letter, August 19) for a review of the future of medical education is very timely, especially as regards the training of doctors — training which hitherto has occurred almost exclusively in teaching hospitals, with bedside clinical teaching playing a major role.

With the reduction in bed numbers and shorter occupancy times it will become progressively more difficult to increase the number of student doctors and to train them in the traditional manner. Furthermore, many chronic disorders — eg, diabetes, hypertension, psychiatric illness, asthma — are now managed largely in the community.

In the United States, where graduate entry to medical school is the norm, a much greater part of the learning is set in the community and family physicians are much more closely integrated into medical-school facilities. Indeed, some medical students are specifically chosen by the colleges because of their interest in family practice.

At a time when recruitment to general practice is so low we should consider very carefully the future style and content of medical education, as well as its funding and expansion.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON BAILEY,
Orchard House Surgery,
Newmarket, Suffolk,
August 19.

From Dr Eric Sidebottom

Sir, Dr Wales makes no mention of a major report on clinical academic careers, commissioned by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, recently undertaken by an independent task force and published last month. I know as the Richards report, this 100-page document highlights the problems for clinical academics of working for two masters — the NHS

and the universities — both of them under ever increasing financial and workload pressures. It makes 35 recommendations to improve the situation.

While the report accepts that NHS staff contribute much to the teaching of clinical medical students, it also stresses that it is inevitably the academic staff who are responsible for the planning and organisation of that teaching. They also lead much of the clinical research on which progress in the treatment and prevention of disease so much depends, and where the reputation of UK medicine is so high.

In the last year, as secretary to the task force, I visited almost every medical and dental school in the UK. I was greatly impressed both by the vision, determination and entrepreneurial skills of the deans and their teams and by the commitment of a small core of young doctors to following clinical academic careers.

However, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to maintain current standards of medical education if improvements are not made to the structure of these careers. The cohort of the committed academics — driven, we were told, by a strange inner force — will not be large enough.

Incidentally, any serious review of medical education, such as Dr Wales proposes, should address the declining proportion of doctors registered to practise in the UK who are also trained here. How many people, I wonder, realise that in 1996 only 38 per cent of doctors taking full registration with the General Medical Council received their medical degree from a UK university, compared with 61 per cent in 1986?

Yours sincerely,
ERIC SIDEBOTTOM,
Pain Research Unit,
Churchill Hospital, Oxford OX3 7JL,
eric.sidebottom@nuffield.ox.ac.uk
August 20.

Stopped clocks

From Dr John Wall

Sir, Derwent May is right (article, August 22) to lament the state of our public clocks. Nothing is more depressing than the sight of a stopped clock. Their plight is the more apparent since they are in the nature of the case placed prominently in the public view.

Something must be done. I was part of a team which put together a submission to the Millennium Commission for a "Museum of the Measurement of Time". One of its objectives was "to incorporate workshops and facilities for the restoration to working order of wayside clocks which have, sadly, ceased to tell the proper time".

Alas, that project has come to naught. May we now urge some other institution, or some public-spirited philanthropist, to take on board this urgent task? No undertaking could be more appropriate to mark the millennium since both are concerned with the measurement of time itself.

How invigorating it would be if every public clock in the land, or for that matter every private clock in public view, were accurately to announce the beginning of the second millennium. And how ominously disappointing if they do not.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WALL,
Drystones, 7 Waydale Close,
Kirkbymoorside, York,
August 23.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Vegetarian views meet opposition

From Professor R. T. D. Oliver

Sir, While I respect Simon Barnes's view ("A meatless diet isn't healthy; just wise", August 23) that factory farming is cruel, I was unable to understand, from what he wrote, why he is averse to eating a wild rabbit. Equally I wonder why he considers animal life superior to plant life, given our Lord's plea to consider the lily of the fields as one of us, and the fact that all animal life depends on plants to generate our oxygen.

I have an omnivorous cat that was made ill by living on an all-meat diet. Recently I observed a lion kill on safari in Kenya and was struck by how the stomach contents of digested grass. It seems clear that so-called carnivores have a broader palate than conventionally believed. Observing the lions led me to wonder how herbivores in the field avoid eating insects on the grass and conclude that in the wild all animals are omnivores with a greater or lesser dependence on one or other extreme.

With evidence that pure vegetarians have more anaemia, it is clear that vegetarianism is not good for all of us, however much Simon Barnes may think it is wise.

Yours faithfully,
TIM OLIVER,
Sir Maxwell Joseph Professor
of Medical Oncology,
Medical Oncology Department,
1st Floor, King George V Building,
St Bartholomew's Hospital,
West Smithfield, EC1,
August 27.

From Mr Julian Murray-Evans

Sir, Simon Barnes's resort to logic to lay claim to an ethical high ground for vegetarianism is surprising in the extreme. His argument suggests that man is unique in being able to disentangle himself from the animal kingdom, implying that he is different from, and, perhaps, superior to the creatures about him.

Shocking as it might be to revisionist vegetarians, the eating of meat is simply recognition of the coexistence between species, providing a demonstration of an understanding of our humble place in the ordered structure of life.

Yours sincerely,
JULIAN MURRAY-EVANS,
40 Woodmancote,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire,
August 24.

No horsewhips

From Mrs Paula Marshall

Sir, In an otherwise reasonable article on the etiquette of breaking engagements (August 22) Julian Champkin comes to suggest that "if Mills and Boon historical romances are to be believed, the man stood a fair chance of being horsewhipped as well as sued by the wronged girl's enraged relations".

I have written 25 historical romances for Mills and Boon, and have also read a large number by other authors and I cannot recall such an incident in any of them. If Julian Champkin is unable to give details of titles, chapters and pages to support his assertion, I shall assume that he is simply carrying on the new pages' noble tradition of using Mills and Boon as a literary whipping boy.

On second thoughts perhaps I ought to thank him for providing me with an original idea for my 26th.

Yours faithfully,
PAULA MARSHALL,
41 Braunstone Avenue, Leicester,
August 22.

A-level lit crit

From Mr Michael Cole

Sir, Adrian Room (letter, August 20) is somewhat unfair to deride an A-level candidate's concluding sentence on *Candida* as being, possibly, a "catch-all phrase" recommended by the candidate's teacher.

Even if that were true, the fact that the candidate in question was able to commit to memory a sentence containing one capital letter, four commas, one colon, the word "tis" without an apostrophe, and a final full point — and then to produce that sentence under examination conditions, with all those eight features correctly employed, each in its correct place — seems to me to be ample reason these days to award the candidate an A level in something.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL COLE,
7 Pullyen Drive, York,
cole@clique.co.uk
August 22.

Chinese puzzle

From Mr Stephen V. Straker

Sir, Whilst on holiday in Cornwall recently I bought a pair of cheap sandals. A sticky label was attached to one of the soles giving the following information:

Uppers: other material
Lining/socks: other material
Outer sole: other material
Made in China.

Yours faithfully,
S. V. STRAKER,
Cromden Lodge,
5 Manor Road, Reigate, Surrey,
Av20 2E.

[illegible]

OBITUARIES

ROBERT KILN

Robert Kiln, Lloyd's underwriter and archaeologist, died on August 16, aged 77. He was born on May 14, 1920.

Success in business is one thing; spending the fruits wisely and creatively is quite another. Robert Kiln was not only one of the leading Lloyd's underwriters of his generation, but also the most influential sponsor of archaeological projects in the late 20th century. In the last 20 years of his life he gave away more than £1 million, mostly in packets of £500 to £1,000, and mostly to new and hitherto unknown projects. In particular, his instigation of the British Archaeological Awards began a new search for excellence in all aspects of archaeology.

Robert John Kiln was born in Middlesex and educated at Merchant Taylors'. By profession a Lloyd's underwriter, he joined Sir Matthew Drysdale's non-marine box at Lloyd's in 1938. As a member of the Honourable Artillery Company, he had his introduction to archaeology in 1940 when he unearthed some arrowheads while digging an air-raid shelter in the HAC playing fields. His dress being too untidy for the Royal Horse Artillery, he was posted to the Hertfordshire Yeomanry.

He first saw action on D-Day, when he had a grandstand view of the whole proceedings. From a naval command vessel close inshore he spent much of the day directing the fire of the ships behind onto targets on shore. Eventually he landed.

The Hertfordshire Yeomanry was the first unit to use 25-pounder guns fitted to a Valentine tank chassis, and with the 8th Field Regiment RA he took part in the fierce fighting in the bocage and continued across Europe. In September he was severely wounded in Antwerp by a shell and lost a leg. He was later told by a consultant surgeon that his stump was too long and had to be shortened, but he walked out, and thereafter had little time for consultants. His story, written from the point of view of a fighting soldier, was published as *D-Day to Arrhen* in 1953.

Kiln returned to the Drysdale syndicate in 1946 and built up an international reputation as a leading underwriter specialising in excess of loss reinsurance. Brokers relied on his mathematical ac-



curacy, his strong technical grasp, his sense of fairness and his willingness to adapt his quotations to the wishes of his clients. If this could be done in a manner likely to be profitable to Lloyd's Names.

Kiln had a strong desire for independence, and so was not always the easiest employee to control. In 1962 he decided to found his own underwriting agency, and syndicates. The first few years were difficult for Kiln and for Lloyd's, but his reputation remained the loyalty of Names and agents. This loyalty was rewarded when substantial profits and growth were achieved from 1968 onwards. Syndicates were developed in all markets, and substantial accounts were acquired from British Commonwealth countries and Japan as a balance to the traditional American exposures. He played a key role in the development of national markets as Third World countries gained independence from Britain.

Kiln was a strong supporter of the initiative to create a Lloyd's life insurance com-

pany and became chairman of Lloyd's Life Insurance in 1979. The company grew substantially and profitably under his chairmanship, and he strongly disagreed with the decision of the Council of Lloyd's to sell Lloyd's Life to the Royal Insurance Company in 1986.

Robert Kiln was elected to the Committee of Lloyd's on three occasions between 1970 and 1980. His desire for reform and his critical view of many practices were not well supported, and he resigned in exasperation in 1981. He continued, however, to play an important part in insurance education. He was much in demand as a lecturer, arbitrator and expert witness. His books — *Reinsurance in Practice* (1981) and *Reinsurance Underwriting* (1985) — remain standard reading for reinsurers, students and practitioners worldwide.

Robert Kiln believed that new commercial ventures should be debated and judged from an ethical, as well as a financial, point of view. This rigorous attitude and a proper concern for Names, for cus-

tomers and for employees enabled his organisation to avoid many of the problems that have cost Lloyd's dear. When Kiln established his firm, he set aside some shares for the Robert Kiln Charitable Trust, which distributed money for music (his first wife was a talented musician), conservation, education and, above all, archaeology. Over the years Kiln distributed more than £1 million — mostly in very small amounts. In many cases he was the first donor to a project, supplying the vital seed corn. Thus the Sheffield University archaeological project in the Outer Hebrides, for instance, would never have got off the ground without his grant of £1,000 in its first year; subsequently more than £250,000 has been raised from other sources.

Larger gifts were made to the Universities of Durham and London, but mostly the gifts were small. What was striking was the range, the imagination and the speed with which grants were made: one university heard that an X-ray machine it needed was

going begging for £2,000 in a sale — the money was made available the next day.

Perhaps his most lasting contribution to archaeology was his establishment, with Magnus Magnusson, of the British Archaeological Awards. These began as the BBC Chronicle awards from 1976 to 1980, but when the BBC sponsorship came to an end, Kiln played the major role in the negotiations that led to the establishment of awards which now number more than a dozen, for excellence in every department of British archaeology.

He personally sponsored what he always considered to be the most important award, the Pitt Rivers Award for amateur or independent archaeologists. Characteristically he distributed the cash to the finalists who needed it, supporting those whose projects were at an early stage, and it is here that small sums can make a huge difference. For the past 20 years Kiln has been virtually the sole private sponsor of amateur archaeology.

He was a practical volunteer in archaeology from the 1950s, despite his wooden leg, and he undertook formal training by taking the postgraduate diploma in archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology in London from 1961 to 1965; he was awarded a prize as the outstanding student of the year in 1964.

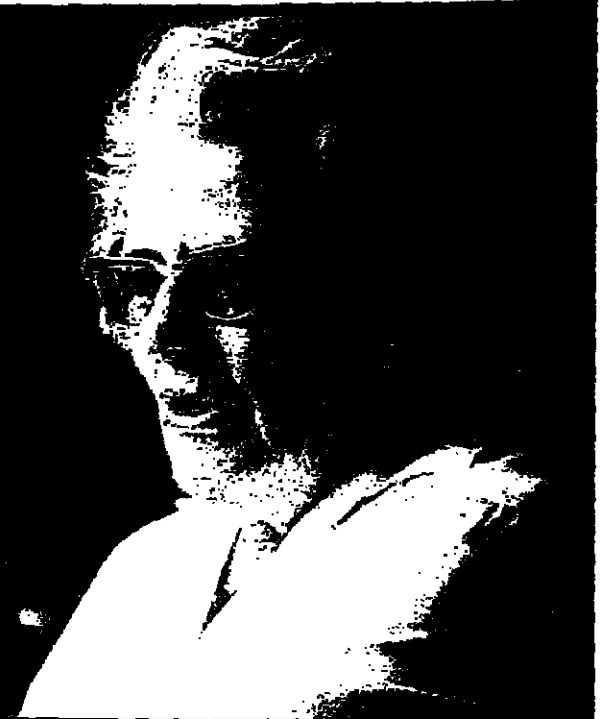
All this came at a time when he was setting up — under great pressure — his own firm, and running the family, too, while his wife was having their sixth child; colleagues could never understand how, or indeed when, he was able to get through so much work.

He was treasurer of Rescue (the Trust for British Archaeology) from 1971 to 1976; he played a notable role in Hertfordshire archaeology; he was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, honorary lecturer in archaeology at Durham University and was awarded an Hon DLit by Sheffield University. He was a prolific author of pamphlets and reports on archaeology, and he also wrote a book, *Ware and Hertford* (with Clive Partridge).

Robert Kiln had three sons and three daughters with his first wife, Daphne, whom he married in 1949 and who died in 1976. He is survived by his second wife, Leny, whom he married in 1978, and by his six children and three stepchildren.

NANCY WANSBROUGH

Nancy Wansbrough, cricketer, sociologist and author, died on August 13, aged 82. She was born on July 22, 1915.



WITH varied gifts and a formidable personality, Nancy Wansbrough made contributions to women's cricket, sociology and the Church of England. As Nancy Joy, she toured Australia with the post-war English Women's cricket team. Her sociological work was mainly in the field of mental health and unemployment; she was Director of the British Institute of Industrial Therapy from 1980 to 1983. She was one of the first women to preach at the Anglo-Catholic stronghold of All Saints, Margaret Street, in London.

Sylvia Nancy Joy was educated at a boys' preparatory school at Aysgarth in Yorkshire, where her father was headmaster, and at Downe House School in Berkshire. She read politics, philosophy and economics at Somerville College, Oxford.

During the war she joined the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry and was then engaged in personnel work for the Civil Service. She was also involved in secret decoding work. In 1948-49 she toured Australia with the England Women's cricket team. Her highest score was 91 and her tour average was 30. She did not play in any of the Test matches, but described the tour in her first book, a short history of women's cricket, entitled *Maiden Over*.

She met her future husband George Wansbrough when both were walking their horses back from a hunt, and they married in 1953. During the early 1960s she supported his doomed struggle to sell the idea of a luxury high-performance car, the Gordon-Keeble, only to see Aston Martin and Jensen succeed where they had failed. Her husband, a well-known industrialist of the time, went on to become a director of the Bank of England. She worked as a researcher

with the Action Society and then spent 12 years as visiting research fellow in the sociology department of Southampton University. She founded the Southampton Industrial Therapy Organisation and, together with Philip Cooper, wrote *Open Employment after Mental Illness*. This campaigning book is a closely argued and rigorous explanation of how former mental patients should be allowed back to work as a crucial part of their rehabilitation. For this work she was awarded an honorary doctorate by Southampton University. After publishing the book she worked for eight years for the Department of Health in the field of mental illness and unemployment.

Her wide interests and experience assisted the work of many Hampshire organisations and societies. She was chairman of the Winchester branch of MIND and of the Compton and Shawford Festival Choir.

In 1988 Nancy Wansbrough became a lay reader in the

diocese of Winchester, where she exercised a lively and enthusiastic ministry in the parishes of Compton and Overbourne, and produced two more books: *Letters to an Atheist* (1988) and *Commit Yourself* (1994).

In 1995 she was given an Hon DLit by Southampton University and moved into a small flat overlooking Winchester Cathedral, where she was able to continue her ministry to visitors, as well as helping in the city centre parish of St Laurence with St Swithun-upon-Kingsgate.

Nancy Wansbrough loved good company, food and wine and entertaining. She travelled extensively, especially in Italy, which she had known before the war, but also in Eastern Europe and some of the more remote parts of the former Soviet Union. Her left-wing political and theological views were expressed with vigour, and she relished a good argument.

Her husband died in 1979. She is survived by a stepdaughter and two stepsons.

PROFESSOR LLOYD THOMPSON

Lloyd Thompson, Professor of Classics at Ibadan University, Nigeria, 1967-95, died of cancer yesterday aged 65. He was born on June 24, 1932.



WHEN Lloyd Thompson finally left the University of Ibadan in 1995, having joined the staff there less than ten years after its founding as Nigeria's first university, he was the longest-serving member of the academic staff. In nearly 40 years he had won enormous respect and affection from colleagues and students, and his special contribution was enhanced by his background and experience as a West Indian.

Lloyd Arthur Thompson was born in Barbados, and went to school at Harrison College, where the foundations of his classical scholarship and his sense of mischief were laid. In 1952 he was awarded the coveted Barbados Scholarship, and he read Classics with distinction at St John's College, Cambridge, with which he maintained lifelong connections. He began lecturing at Ibadan in 1956, in a strong department headed by John Fergusson, whom he succeeded in 1967.

Although Classics has declined in most English-speaking universities, there was a feeling in Ghana and Nigeria that only the best were good enough for Africa, and the classical tradition was perceived as important to university life. Classics had an honoured place, and Thompson played a large part in maintaining this at Ibadan. Because of his commitment to

Africa, he became increasingly interested in the better understanding of the two cultures he had most at heart, the Romans and the black Africans. He collaborated with John Fergusson in writing and editing *Africa in Classical Antiquity* (1969), and in 1989 he produced his own book, *Romans and Blacks*, which was a deeply thoughtful study of what is and is not racist.

While democracy declined in Nigeria, Lloyd Thompson seized the opportunity of the 2,500th anniversary of the founding of the world's oldest democracy, with the reforms of Cleisthenes at Athens, and organised a conference under the title 'Democracy, Democratisation and Africa'. Published in 1994, the papers in the book of that name constitute a challenge to the unhappy and undemocratic developments in African countries in recent years.

In 1956 Thompson married Alma Platten, whom he had met during his student days in Cambridge. Lloyd and Alma

were uncle and aunt to successive generations of students, who filled their house and fed at their table. They both achieved profound insight into and affection for the young Nigerians, but never succumbed to any of the false values on offer. Lloyd was an approachable man who was friendly as well as wise.

He often acted as honest broker in difficult university affairs: people from every faction felt able to discuss their problems with him. Fearless and forthright himself, he never hesitated to express his views, even when it was dangerous to do so. His independent spirit enabled him to accept disruption and hardship with good humour and philosophic calm, and while he was disappointed to see standards decline in later years, he never gave way to cynicism or despair. Like all West Indians he was keen on cricket, and he captained the university staff team.

He is survived by his wife, a daughter and two sons.

DUNCAN SWIFT



Duncan Swift, jazz pianist, died from cancer on August 8 aged 54. He was born on February 21, 1943.

MOST jazz pianists build their reputations either as soloists or as band players, but Duncan Swift was in the rare category of those who master both aspects of the trade. Despite hailing from the most un-jazzlike town of Rotherham, he became a leading exponent of the complex solo style known as Harlem 'Stride' piano, made famous by Fats Waller and James

P. Johnson, and he also played to thousands of jazz lovers around the world as a member of Kenny Ball's Jazzmen from 1977 and 1983. Swift's band playing was characterised by an almost demonic energy, which was guaranteed to lift any rhythm section and help it to swing.

After moving to the Midlands in his teens, Swift first played trombone in the band of Jim Simpson, who subsequently became director of the Birmingham International Jazz Festival and helped to establish Swift's solo career. Swift played piano during

the early days of the 'trad' boom in Bill Nile's Delta Jazz Band, before going on to qualify as a music teacher at Birmingham School of Music.

The 1970s were a lean period for many professional jazz musicians and Swift spent ten years as a teacher and lecturer, playing semi-pro engagements on trombone and piano with several bands including his own New Delta Jazzmen.

In 1977 he started playing regularly with Kenny Ball, from time to time alternating with other pianists including Allan Bradley. By April 1979

he decided to make this his full-time career, joining Ball for four and a half years of relentless touring on a hectic schedule which had seldom flagged for Ball since the heyday of trad.

In October 1983 Swift left the band, opting to spend a few years out of the limelight running a pub in Bewdley. Yet for a pianist of his ability, the lure of the stage was too strong for him to stay away, and after a year in Pete Allen's band he launched a predominantly solo career in 1988, on the back of his first CD as a soloist, *Out Looking for the Lion*. Those who already knew Swift's playing were not surprised by the critical acclaim that greeted this album and its successors, including *The Broadwood Concert* (1991). His formidable technique and brilliant resurrection of forgotten tunes by his Harlem idols made his discs and concerts both memorable and popular.

Yet just as he achieved the highest levels in his solo playing, he began to suffer from a series of nagging illnesses. Audiences were seldom aware that he was in constant pain from back problems. Finally he was stricken by throat cancer in 1995.

He is survived by his wife, Faith, and a daughter.

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NEWS

MI6 recruited for war on drugs

■ Robin Cook announced that the full intelligence resources of MI6 would be made available to tackle the growing global threat from drug chiefs.

Launching the drive not far from Burma, the world's biggest opium producer, the Foreign Secretary said that the Government was determined "to fight this scourge". It would attack the drugs supply chain at every stage, from production to money-laundering. Page 1

Blair tells ministers to sharpen up

■ Tony Blair will give Labour a warning tomorrow that the difficulties experienced by the Government in the past few weeks are a reminder that it cannot relax discipline. His remarks will be a tacit admission that ministers could have handled themselves better in some incidents. Page 1

Sinn Fein invite

Mao Mowlam will this morning declare the six-week-old IRA ceasefire to be "genuine in word and deed" and formally invite Sinn Fein to the full peace negotiations. Page 1

Boys charged

Two ten-year-old boys have been charged with raping a nine-year-old girl at a West London school, the first time that children so young have been charged with rape. Page 1

Devolution poll

Nearly half the English public want the chance to vote on the Government's proposals for Scottish and Welsh devolution, according to a new MORI poll for The Times. Page 2

Ordeal at sea

"This was our home and we have lost everything," Don and Yvonne Newman, round-the-world sailors plucked from the sea by Royal Navy helicopters, talk of their ordeal. Page 3

MI5 disclosure

MI5 is to make public how many files on individuals and organisations are still being held at its headquarters. Page 4

Scripts blamed

A literary agent accused British film producers of rushing standard scripts into production, causing many movies to fail to find a screening. Page 5

Loop-the-loop riders left hanging

■ Twenty-nine people were left hanging upside down for 90 minutes after a loop-the-loop train jammed in mid-course at Belgium's leading amusement park. No one was injured, but passengers screamed and threw off their clothes as they hung in space, held only by the safety bars over their shoulders and laps. Page 1

New drinks alert

After alcopops, parents have something new to worry about: "super-sports drinks". Caffeine-laden energy drinks are being marketed as strong stimulants for the young. Page 7

Fluoride claim

Fluoride in water is the best way to improve dental health for the poor, reaching those who rarely brush their teeth and halving tooth decay in the poorest areas, says a new study. Page 6

Cook gesture

Robin Cook highlighted the issue of human rights and arms sales on arriving in Indonesia. His first act was to telephone the bishop who is campaigning for East Timor independence. Page 8

Serb violence

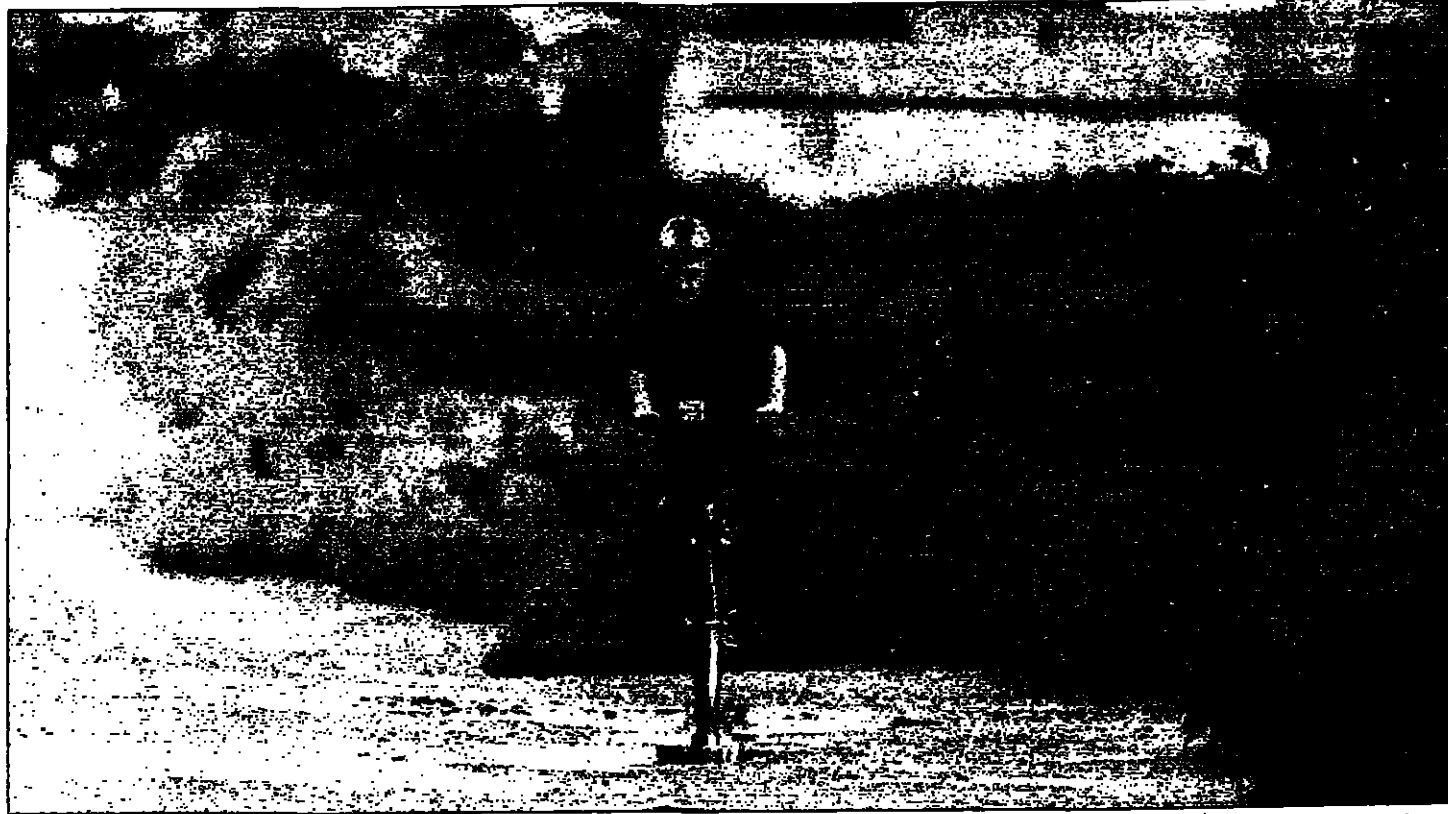
American troops fired teargas at Bosnian Serbs as the struggle between President Plavic and Radovan Karadzic threatened widespread violence. Page 10

Kennedy out

The Kennedy dynasty may be drawing to a close after the son of Robert Kennedy announced he will not run for Governor of Massachusetts. Page 11

Inquiry setback

A UN inquiry into the alleged massacre of tens of thousands of Rwandan refugees in the former Zaire earlier this year has been thrown into jeopardy. Page 9



A policeman's son recreating the last cycle ride by the Norfolk murder victim Thomas Marshall, 12, as detectives sought public help

Business

Boots: The retailer revealed a £180 million loss on the sale of its Fads and Homestyle DIY subsidiaries for a nominal sum. Page 23

Bank fined: Swiss Bank Corporation has been fined £480,000 by a City watchdog for share dealings in electricity companies and an investment trust. Page 23

PF: The Government faces a compensation bill of more than £6 million after the Highways Agency admitted liability for the costs of bidding for three axed road schemes. Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index fell 61.5 points to close at 4845.4. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 101.9 to 101.5 after a rise from \$1.6108 to \$1.6147 but a fall from DM2.9151 to DM2.9003. Page 26

Sport

Football: Three players and the Arsenal coach have been charged with misconduct by the Football Association after the match between Leicester City and Arsenal. Page 44

Cricket: Michael Atherton will today make an announcement about his future as England cricket captain. Page 44

Golf: The scramble for Ryder Cup places led to low scoring on the opening day of the BMW International in Munich. Page 44

Football: British clubs today find out their opponents in the three European competitions. Page 38

Tennis: Tim Henman has earned rave reviews from the American media for his victory over Thomas Muster. Page 42

Arts

Bigger strokes: The millennial doom merchants who foresee the end of art as we know it are wrong, as a new London show demonstrates. Page 14

Beds and bands: The Jacobean romp *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* is filling the Globe with its cynical, comical vision of a sex-obsessed London. Page 15

Boyz own: Hard to believe that Motown Records could take a wrong turn, but if soul band Boyz II Men's new album fails, this once-great record label is in trouble. Page 16

Crackling pop: The resurgence of Edwyn Collins continues apace with his new LP, *I'm Not Following You*, and Genesis produces an oddly dated album. Page 17

Lifestyle

Women's choices: One in five women in Western Europe has decided against having children. Joan Smith explains why she is among them. Page 12

Sisterly hatred: From a tower in Tuscany, Lyndall Hopkinson is plotting literary revenge on her half-sister across the 1,500 miles between Italy and England. The subject of the feud is their mother, the novelist Antonia White. Richard Owen reports. Page 13

All alone: Kimberly Fortier, an American working in London, discovers that in August there is no one left in Britain to do business with. Page 13

League leaders: Margaret Kenyon tells Tim Jones the secrets of the A-level league tables. Page 31

Student support: Iola Smith reports on the financial advice service a university runs for its students. Page 32

When Lionel Jospin came to power, Germany was very scared. We were on the verge of a crisis of confidence between the two countries. Three months have passed. The holidays have calmed our spirits. The return to work must be the occasion for a new start.

Le Figaro

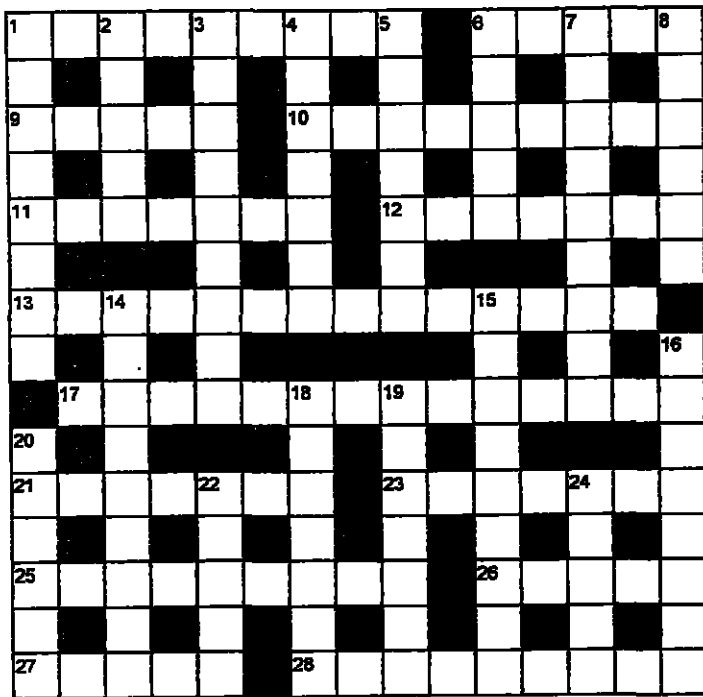
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **CAR 97**
Ninety years on, a rerun of the Paris-Peking motor rally

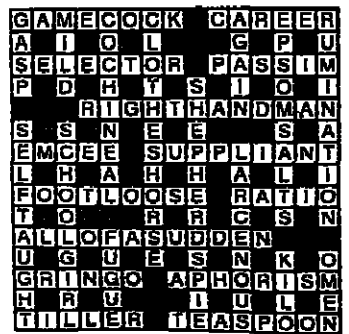
■ **WEEKEND MONEY**
The self-assessment deadline looms: tips for last-minute form-fillers

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,571



- ACROSS**
- One can have a close shave with this murderer (3-6).
 - Money for some of the players (5).
 - Chekhov's pawnbroker? (5).
 - Boxer, say, pulling punch? (4-5).
 - Account given in novel clear about it (7).
 - Len gave order for one of the leading new books (7).
 - Idle fellow for whom virtue is its own reward? (4-3-7).
 - Make surprisingly good landing after trip (4-2-4).
 - Fowl - a hooter on the lake, say (7).
 - Observation permitted in informal letter (7).
 - Shotgun wedding embrace (9).
 - Grandma putting new heart into children's nurse (5).
 - Exceptionally good purse distributed (5).
- DOWN**
- Special delivery held back in dangerous frontier town (5,4).
 - Conservative too old to get press attention (8).
 - Military cost necessary to fight unicorn (5).
 - Nourishing treat most of the rich finish off (9).
 - Caruso left confused about kissing (7).
 - Destroyer at sea using electric ray (7).
 - Tea in raffish place, having left motorway (5).
 - Take pride in changing gear on car (9).
 - Miss Australia? (6).
 - Old sweep, with inside information, is one for a flutter (6-3).
 - Doubt could be confusing in the case (9).
 - Some relief work may be included in these figures (8).
 - Sisters at entrance to nave remove head-dress (7).
 - Meant to avoid accident? On the contrary, partners have a child (3-4).
 - Soldiers holding strike in Macbeth's land (6).
 - The glib-edged alternative (5).
 - Where always go, one can get exotic apparel (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,570



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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 5:08 am Sun sets: 7:54 pm
Moon sets: 6:00 pm Moon rises: 2:25 am
New moon September 1
London 5:54 pm to 6:10 am
Edinburgh 6:15 pm to 6:13 am
Manchester 6:05 pm to 6:14 am
Pencance 6:13 pm to 6:34 am

FORECAST

■ **General:** Scotland will be mostly cloudy with heavy showers and possibly thunder. N. Ireland, N. England and N. Wales will have a bright day with squally showers. Southern parts will start bright with scattered heavy showers.
■ **London, SE and E England, E. Anglia, E & W Midlands, S. Wales:** sunny spells and showers at first, hazy sunshine in afternoon. Moderate SW wind. Max 18-21C (64-70F).
■ **West S and SW England, Channel:** early sunshine and showers, then more rain on South Coast and Channel. Moderate SW wind. Max 17-20C (63-68F).
■ **N. Wales, NW, Cent N and NE England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man:** cool with sunshine and showers. Moderate SW wind. Max 17-20C (63-68F).
■ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee:** sunny spells and showers at first, hazy sunshine in afternoon. Moderate SW wind. Max 17-20C (63-68F).

Aberdeen, Moray, Fife, NE Scotland

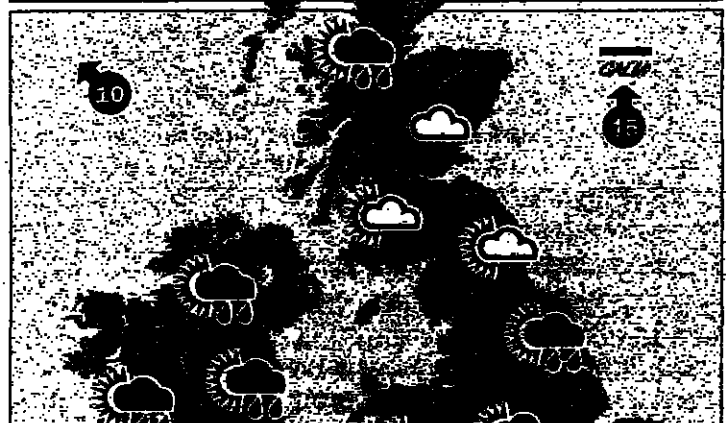
sunny spells then showers with some heavy downpours. Moderate SE wind. Max 16-18C (61-64F).
■ **SW and NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll:** windy with heavy showers, possibly with thunder. Fresh SW wind. Max 15-18C (59-64F).
■ **Orkney, Shetland:** sunny spells and showers. Moderate SE wind. Max 15-18C (59-64F).
■ **N. Ireland:** sunny spells and sharp showers. Moderate to fresh SW wind. Max 17-19C (63-66F).
■ **Republic of Ireland:** sunny intervals as early showers die out. Wind SW, moderate or fresh, light later. Max 17-19C (63-66F).
■ **Outlook:** showers in north tomorrow but fine in south. West will be wet and windy on Sunday, but east should be dry.

Aberdeen, Moray, Fife, NE Scotland

City	Sun	Rain	C	Max	Min	City	Sun	Rain	C	Max	Min
Aberdeen	5.5	0.21	19	68	56	Leeds	2.1	0.07	19	68	56
Angus	9.4	0.01	19	68	56	Liverpool	7.2	0.11	17	63	52
Argyll	6.8	0.11	20	68	56	Luton	6.3	0.17	17	63	52
Belfast	7.8	0.01	18	64	52	Manchester	8.4	0.01	19	68	56
Birmingham	8.3	0.14	20	68	56	Nottingham	7.5	0.42	20	68	56
Bristol	8.1	0.19	19	68	56	Reading	6.2	0.50	19	68	56
Bournemouth	7.7	0.14	19	68	56	Sheffield	6.7	0.28	19	68	56
Brighton	8.1	0.19	19	68	56	Sunderland	5.4	0.11	21	64	51
Cardiff	4.5	0.12	16	61	50	Swansea	5.1	0.17	16	64	51
Cardigan	4.1	0.40	19	68	56	Torquay	7.0	0.01	20	68	56
Colwyn Bay	8.9	0.01	22	72	58	Walsley	6.2	0.50	19	68	56
Cromer	2.0	0.28	19	68	56	Weymouth	2.8	0.28	19	68	56
Durham	5.0	0.01	18	64	52	Widnes	7.8	0.50	19	68	56
Eastbourne	7.3	0.04	20	68	56	Worcester	8.9	0.23	19	68	56
Edinburgh	8.3	0.17	19	68	56	Wrexham	6.8	0.28	19	68	56
Exeter	3.3	0.17	18	64	52	Wymondham	6.8	0.28	19	68	56
Exmouth	5.4	0.66	17	63	52	York	0.2	0.04	18	61	50
Farnham	7.2	0.15	19	68	56						
Folkestone	6.4	0.07	19	68	56						
Glasgow	9.2	0.21	21	70	58						
Gloucester	6.8	0.01	18	64	52						
Grimsby	7.4	0.13	19	68	56						
Hastings	2.0	0.28	19	68	56						
Hayling I.	2.8	0.06	19	68	56						
Humberside	3.0	0.30	19	68	56						
Isle of Wight	2.8	0.06	19	68	56						
Jersey	7.3	1.59	18	64	52						
Kelso	4.9	0.54	18	64	52						
Kidderley	6.6	0.17	20	68	56						

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday. X = not available

FORECAST



Changes to chart below from noon: low B drifts N and E; low V moves NE towards S Britain with little change in central pressure; high C should edge NE and build.

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Aberdeen	5.5	0.21	19	68	56	Leeds	2.1	0.07	19	68	56
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Argyll	6.8	0.11	20	68	56	Luton	6.3	0.17	17	63	52
Belfast	7.8	0.01	18	64	52	Manchester	8.4	0.01	19	68	56
Birmingham	8.3	0.14	20	68	56	Nottingham	7.5	0.42	20	68	56
Bristol	8.1	0.19	19	68	56	Reading	6.2	0.50	19	68	56
Bournemouth	7.7	0.14	19	68	56	Sheffield	6.7	0.28	19	68	56
Brighton	8.1	0.19	19	68	56	Sunderland	5.4	0.11	21	64	51
Cardiff	4.5	0.12	16	61	50	Swansea	5.1	0.17	16	64	51
Cardigan	4.1	0.40	19	68	56	Torquay	7.0	0.01	20	68	56
Colwyn Bay	8.9	0.01	22	72	58	Walsley	6.2	0.50	19	68	56
Cromer	2.0	0.28	19	68	56	Weymouth	2.8	0.28	19	68	56
Durham	5.0	0.01	18	64	52	Widnes	7.8	0.50	19	68	56
Eastbourne	7.3	0.04	20	68	56	Worcester	8.9	0.23	19	68	56
Edinburgh	8.3	0.17	19	68	56	Wrexham	6.8	0.28	19	68	56
Exeter	3.3	0.17	18	64	52	Wymondham	6.8	0.28	19	68	56
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Kelso	4.9	0.54	18	64	52						
Kidderley	6.6	0.17	20	68	56						

Aberdeen, Moray, Fife, NE Scotland

TODAY					TODAY			
AM	HT	PM	FT	Leith	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge		12:11	4.5	Lowest	00:45	4.8	13:59	4.8
Aberdeen		12:14	5.2	Liverpool	00:48	8.0	22:42	8.3
Angus	08:10	10:7	17:10	11.2	00:54	2.3	20:46	2.5
Argyll		12:15	4.8	Lowest	01:00	4.8	13:59	4.8
Cardiff	05:05	10:00	17:26	10.6	01:05	5.4	17:03	5.9
Downport	06:00	4.6	16:26	4.8	01:10	3.7	18:50	4.0
Edinburgh	03:38	5.8	16:26	5.8	01:15	4.6	19:27	4.8
Dublin (N 10)	11:18	3.8	22:22	3.8	01:44	3.6	17:14	3.8
Falmouth	03:31	4.4	16:40	4.7	01:46	3.4	17:27	3.8
Greenock	11:58	2.8	22:22	3.1	01:50	4.0	22:16	4.7
Hatfield	10:09	5.4	22:22	5.4	02:02	4.0	22:48	4.8
Holyhead	08:28	4.3	21:28	5.1	02:06	4.0	21:45	4.1
Port (Robert Dr)	04:37	7.8	19:15	7.8	02:09	4.6	18:59	7.9
Shrewsbury	04:18	7.5	16:46	7.8	02:13	4.1	18:27	4.8
King's Lynn	04:42	5.8	17:28	5.8	02:16	3.6	22:57	3.7

All times BST. Heights in metres.

Weather: Highest daytime Celsius Bar. Average temperature.